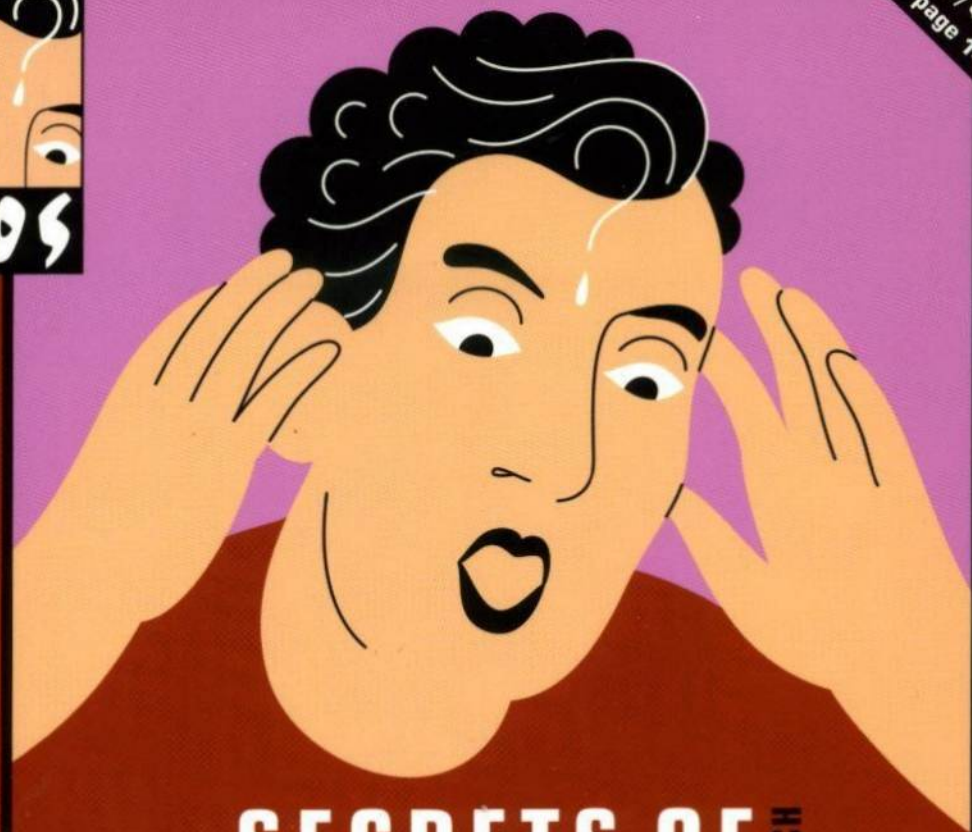


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see page 144



SECRETS OF OPENING SURPRISES

JEROEN BOSCH
EDITOR

VOL. 7



No time to study main lines? Shock your opponent with an SOS!

NEW IN CHESS

SECRETS OF OPENING SURPRISES

7

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Contents

1	Jeroen Bosch	The SOS Files	9
2	John van der Wiel	A Harmless Little Bishop Move	18
3	Jeroen Bosch	Sicilian: the O'Kelly Variation	25
4	Glenn Flear	Really Accepting the QGA	39
5	Friso Nijboer	The Shirov Gambit versus the Philidor	50
6	Dorian Rogozenko	Early Surprise in a Classical Nimzo	57
7	Adrian Mikhalchishin	The Caro-Kann of Bukhuti Gurgenedze	66
8	Jeroen Bosch	Bayonet Blow in the Bogo	70
9	Arthur Kogan	Inspiration versus the Dragon	76
10	Jeroen Bosch	Chasing the 'Trompowsky' Bishop	83
11	Dimitri Reinderman	Edgy Knight against the Bird	94
12	Glenn Flear	The Semi-Slav with 6.a3	103
13	Alexander Finkel	Modern for Advanced Players	116
14	Jeroen Bosch	Taimanov's Surprise Sac in the Kan	125
15	Adrian Mikhalchishin	Anti-Grünfeld and Anti-Volga	130
16	Igor Glek & J.-O. Leconte	French: the Gledhill Attack	134
17	Hikaru Nakamura	Not Going for Scholar's Mate	138
18	Who is Who?	Authors and their Subjects	143



CHAPTER 1 - page 9

Jeroen Bosch

The SOS Files



Van der Werf-Krudde after 11...Qe2

CHAPTER 2 - page 18

John van der Wiel

A Harmless Little Bishop Move



1.e4 e5 2.Qf3 Qc6 3.Qc3 Qf6 4.Qe2

CHAPTER 3 - page 25

Jeroen Bosch

Sicilian: the O'Kelly Variation



1.e4 c5 2.Qf3 a6

CHAPTER 4 - page 39

Glenn Flear

Really Accepting the QGA



1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e3 Qe6!?

CHAPTER 5 - page 50

Friso Nijboer

The Shirov Gambit versus the Philidor



Let's play 5.g4!

CHAPTER 6 - page 57*Dorian Rogozenko***Early Surprise in a Classical Nimzo**

Rubinstein Variation with 4...♘e4

CHAPTER 7 - page 66*Adrian Mikhalchishin***The Caro-Kann of Bukhuti Gurgenzidze**

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 b5!?

CHAPTER 8 - page 70*Jeroen Bosch***Bayonet Blow in the Bogo**

6.g4 in the Vitolinsh Variation

CHAPTER 9 - page 76*Arthur Kogan***Inspiration versus the Dragon**

Play like Tal

CHAPTER 10 - page 83*Jeroen Bosch***Chasing the 'Trompowsky' Bishop**

1.d4 d5 2.♘g5 f6

CHAPTER 11 - page 94*Dimitri Reinderman***Edgy Knight against the Bird**

1.f4 ♘h6

CHAPTER 12 - page 103

Glenn Flear

The Semi-Slav with 6.a3



A simple idea with some bite

CHAPTER 13 - page 116

Alexander Finkel

Modern for Advanced Players



Develop your bishops first

CHAPTER 14 - page 125

Jeroen Bosch

Taimanov's Surprise Sac in the Kan



The intrepid 7...dxe4

CHAPTER 15 - page 130

Adrian Mikhalchishin

Anti-Grünfeld and Anti-Volga



1.d4 d5 2.c4 g6 3.d5!?

CHAPTER 16 - page 134

Igor Glek & Jean-Olivier Leconte

French: the Gledhill Attack



A new direction

CHAPTER 17 - page 138

Hikaru Nakamura

Not Going for Scholar's Mate



1.e4 e5 2.♖h5

CHAPTER 1

Jeroen Bosch

The SOS Files

Welcome to the Jungle!

SOS-6, Chapter 6, p.51

Out there in the jungle that is the weekend congress or the open tournament circuit it pays off to have your own pet systems. The present game is a case in point. Mark Hebden has always been successful in Britain's congresses. One of the English grandmaster's home-cooked lines is what Arthur Kogan has dubbed the Tarzan Attack in SOS-6. The primitive and aggressive nature of this line should explain the name.

□ Mark Hebden
 ■ Michael Hennigan
 England tt 2006/07

**1.d4 ♘f6 2.♙f3 g6 3.♙c3 d5 4.♙f4
 ♙g7 5.♖d2**

This is what the Tarzan Attack is all about. White prepares to exchange the fianchetto bishop and is getting ready to castle queenside.

5...0-0

Prié-Massoni, Calvi 2007, continued instead 5...♙f5 6.0-0-0 ♘bd7 7.♙h6 0-0 8.♙xg7 ♙xg7 9.h3!? c6 10.♙g1 ♙e4 11.♙xe4 dxe4 12.g4! ♙e6 13.♙g5 with interesting play.

The main line is 5...♙e4. Black is exploiting White's last move to exchange a pair of knights whilst gaining some space. After

6.♙xe4 dxe4 7.♙e5 we reach the diagrammed position



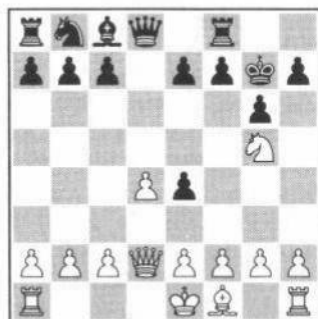
● The main line is 7...♙e6 when Hebden-Rayner, Hastings 2006/07, went: 8.e3 ♘d7 (or 8...0-0 9.♖b4!? b6 – 9...♙d5 10.c4 – 10.0-0-0 a5 11.♖a4 ♙d5 12.♙b5 ♙a7 13.h4 with interesting play in Hebden-Arakhmia, Swansea 2006; possibly stronger after 8...0-0 is 9.c3 f6 10.♙c4 ♙d5 11.♙a5! b6 12.c4! ♙f7 13.♙b3 f5 with the better game for White in Kogan-Damljanovic, Zaragoza 2003) 9.♙xd7 (9.♙c4 0-0 10.d5!? is Kogan's novelty as suggested in SOS-6. Instead the game Yusupov-Kasparov, Belfort 1988, went 10.♙e2 ♙xc4 11.♙xc4 e5 with equality) 9...♖xd7 10.c4 (10.♖b4!? is another Kogan novelty that may promise some advantage) 10...f5 11.h4 h6 (not wishing to repeat 11...0-0 12.h5 ♙f8 13.hxg6 hxg6 from Hebden-Van der Weide, Liverpool 2006) 12.f3 exf3 13.gxf3 ♙f7 14.0-0-0 ♖a4

15.♖b1 0-0-0 16.b3 ♖a3 17.♔d3, and now 17...c5 was best to preserve the equilibrium.

● 7...♙c6?! (a novel approach by Matthew Turner) 8.♙xc6 bxc6 9.e3 c5 (this Grünfeld lever was Black's idea. Possibly he overlooked Hebden's original reply) 10.♖a5! ♖d5 (10...cxd4?? 11.♙xc7 wins the queen!) 11.♙xc7 (11.♙e2 0-0 12.♙d1 is also better for White) 11...0-0 12.♙e2 ♙e6 13.♙g3 ♖b7 14.♖xc5 (White can also play 14.♖b5 ♖xb5 15.♙xb5 cxd4 16.exd4 ♙xd4 17.c3 followed by 18.♙c6) 14...♖xb2 15.0-0 (White is a pawn up and Black's fianchetto bishop is out of play. The opening has been a complete success) 15...♙fc8 16.♖xe7 ♙xc2 Hebden-Turner, 4NCL 2006/07. Rather than the game continuation 17.♙a6?! White should now play 17.♙d1!? to manoeuvre the bishop to b3, after 17...♙cc8 (17...♖xa1 18.♙xc2 ♖xa2 19.♙xc4) 18.♙b3.

6.♙h6 c5

In a recent internet blitz game Arthur Kogan demonstrated that he likes to play what he preaches: 6...♙e4 7.♙xe4 dxe4 8.♙xg7 ♙xg7 9.♙g5 (9.♙e5 ♙e6)



● White had won in Kogan-Martin, Benasque 2002, after 9...f5 10.h4! h6 11.♙h3 e5 12.c3 ♖hx4 13.dxe5 ♖e7 14.f4! exf3 (14...♙d8 15.♖c3±) 15.gxf3 ♖xe5 16.0-0-0 ♙c6 17.♙f4 ♙e6 18.♙d3 ♙f7 19.♙dgl ♙ae8 20.e4! g5 21.♙xh6! fxe4

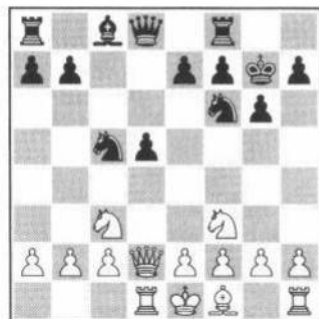
(21...♙xh6 22.♖h2+ ♙g7 23.♙xg5+ ♙f6 24.♙xf5+ ♖xf5 25.exf5+-) 22.♙xg5+! ♙xh6 (22...♙xg5 23.♙e6+ ♙xe6 24.♖xg5+ ♙g6 25.♙xe4+-) 23.♙xe5 ♙xe5 24.♙e6+ e3 25.♖h2+ ♙h5 26.♖f4+ 1-0.

● 9...♖d5 10.c4 (according to Kogan in SOS-6 this is an important improvement first played by Prié) 10...♖xc4 11.♙xe4 ♙d8 12.e3 ♖e6 13.♙d3 f5 14.♙c5 ♖f6 15.0-0 b6 16.♙b3 c5 17.♖e2 cxd4 18.♙xd4 e5 19.♖f3! e4 20.♙xe4 fxe4 21.♖xe4 ♙xd4 22.♖xa8 1-0 Kogan-Zinchenko, ICC blitz 2007.

7.♙xg7 ♙xg7 8.dxc5 ♙a6!?

8...♙c6 9.♙d1 (9.e3) 9...e6 10.e4 dxc4 11.♙g5 gave White a much better ending in Rakic-Petursson, Ljubljana 1981.

9.♙d1 ♙xc5



10.♖d4!?

Previously, the game Hebden-Brandenburg, Liverpool 2006, had seen 10.♙xd5 when White had won a pawn. Black has an edge in development though. The game continued 10...♙ce4!? 11.♖b4 ♙xd5 (11...a5) 12.♖xe4 ♖a5+ 13.c3 and Black was only slightly worse.

10...♖d6

In case of 10...♙e6 White keeps the pressure with 11.♖e5.

11.♙xd5

Having avoided the ...♙ce4 possibility, Hebden now takes the pawn.

11...♖xd5 12.♗xd5 ♘xd5 13.♞xd5
♙a4 14.♞d4!



14...b5 14...♙xb2?? 15.♞b4 traps the knight. 15.b3 ♘c3 16.♗d2 Returning the pawn for a positional advantage. 16...♙xa2 17.e4 ♞b8 18.♙e5 f6 19.♙c6 ♞b7 20.♙d3 e5 21.♞d6 ♞b6 due to this pin Black's knight is able to escape. 22.♞a1 ♙b4 23.♞xa7+ ♖h6 24.♞c7 ♙a6 Now to avoid a repetition White must give up the exchange. 25.♞xc8! ♞xc8 26.♙xe5 ♞cb8 Or 26...♞xd6 27.♙f7+ ♖g7 28.♙xd6 and pawn b5 drops as well. 27.♙g4+ ♖g5 28.♞xb6 ♞xb6 29.♙e3



White has two pawns for the exchange and a much better king. 29...♙c7?! A better attempt was 29...♙c5: it is vital to remove

the bishop in this ending. 30.g3 ♖h6 31.♙c3 ♖g7 32.♙b4 ♞b8 33.♙a5 ♙f7 34.♙d5! ♙xd5 35.exd5 b4? Stronger was 35...♞d8 36.♙xb5 ♞xd5+ 37.♙c6 ♞d4 38.♙c5 ♞d8. 36.♙b5 ♖e7 Black cannot force a repetition, due to 36...♞c8 37.♙c4 ♞b8 38.d6+! ♙f8 39.♙b5. 37.♙xb4 Three passed pawns on the queenside is just too much. White won after 37...♙d6 38.c4 ♞a8 39.♙c6 ♞a2 40.c5+ ♙c7 41.♙b5 ♞xf2 42.d6+ ♙d8 43.♙b6 ♞xh2 44.♙b5 ♞d2 45.c6 ♞xd6 46.♙b7 1-0

Updating Gajewski's Ruy Lopez

SOS-6, Chapter 13, p.104

In SOS-6 Adrian Mikhalechishin noted the arrival of a new Spanish line – Grzegorz Gajewski's 9...♞b8 in the classical tabiya of the Closed Ruy Lopez after 9.h3. Gajewski's line was played a couple of times in the European Championship in Dresden. In our main game we see Arkady Naiditsch adopting 9...♞b8 to obtain an excellent position.

□ Igor Kurnosov

■ Arkady Naiditsch

Dresden Ech 2007

1.e4 e5 2.♙f3 ♙c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4 ♙f6 5.0-0 ♙e7 6.♞e1 b5 7.♙b3 d6 8.c3 0-0 9.h3 ♞b8

As Mikhalechishin explains in SOS-6 there are some very concrete points connected to the rook move (for one: it is important that the rook is not hanging on a8 as we will see). However, if you think about it in an abstract manner: is there any reason why 9...♞b8 would be worse than 9...♙b8? The latter move (which undevelops the knight from its natural square to its original one) is the start

of the ultra-respectable Breyer Variation!

10.d4

The main reply of course. Black now executes his strategic idea:

10...exd4 11.cxd4 d5! 12.e5

An important tactical point of 9...♖b8 is 12.♗e5 ♗xe5 13.dxe5 ♗xe4 14.♙xd5 and with a rook on a8 Black would be lost now! Now the position is equal as was demonstrated in Stehno-Malaniuk, Marianske Lazne 2006: with 14...♗c5 15.♖f3 c6! 16.♙xc6 ♗d3 17.♙d1 ♗xe5 Black won in 49 moves.

12...♗e4

This is the main tabiya of 9...♖b8. White must choose between 13.♗bd2 and 13.♗c3.

13.♗bd2

After 13.♗c3 Black should take, and develop his bishop to the important b1-h7 diagonal: 13...♗xc3 14.bxc3 ♙f5



An interesting strategic position has arisen. White should try to develop some initiative on the kingside. Black is going to prepare ...c5 (often by means of ...♗a5) and prevent White from advancing his f2-pawn all the way up to f5. 15.♗c2 was played in Z.Almasi-Pavasovic, Sibenik 2006. White won quickly, but Mikhalchishin suggests several improvements in SOS-6. Let's see two fairly recent Polish games:

– 15.♙f4 is in principle illogical (White

should prepare f2-f4 at some point). After 15...♗d7 White exchanged the bishop with 16.♙g5 ♙xg5 17.♗xg5 ♗a5?! (17...h6 18.♗f3 and now Black is OK after a knight move – 18...♗a5 or 18...♗e7) 18.♗c2 (18.g4 ♙g6 19.f4) 18...h6 19.♗f3 ♗c4 20.♙xf5 ♖xf5 21.♗h4 ♗d7?! (21...♖g5) 22.f4 ♙b6 23.f5 g5 24.♖g4 ♗h7 and White was better and should now have played 25.♗f3 rather than 25.♗g6?! ♙g8! 26.e6 fxe6 27.fxe6?! (27.♗e5) 27...♖e8 and Black won after a long game, Krzyzanowski-Mickiewicz, Koszalin 2006.

– 15.♗h2 ♗a5 16.♗f1 ♗c4 17.g4 ♗c8 18.♗g3 c5 19.♗f5 g6 20.♗xe7+ ♖xe7 21.♙xc4 dxc4 22.♙h6 (22.d5 ♙b7 with complex play) 22...♙e8 23.♖d2 (23.d5 ♖h4! 24.♙f4 ♖xh3 25.e6 ♙b7) 23...♙b7 and the game ended in a draw after the sharp 24.d5 f6!? 25.exf6 ♖xf6 26.♙f4 ♙bd8 27.♙g5 ♙xe1+ 28.♙xe1 ♖f3 29.♙xd8 ♙xd5 and with a rook up White must go for a perpetual with 30.♙e8+ ♗f7 31.♙c7+ ♗g8 ½-½ Rybak-Czyz, Krakow 2006.

13...♙f5

Again placing this bishop on the b1-h7 diagonal is most natural.



14.♗f1

The alternative is 14.♗c2 when play may continue: 14...♗b4 15.♙b1 (15.♙xe4 dxe4 16.♗xe4 ♖d5 – 16...♙xe4 17.♙xe4 ♖d5 Mikhalchishin – 17.♙g5 ♙xg5 18.♗fxg5

♖bd8 19.a3 ♘c6 20.♘c3 ♗xd4 21.♗f3 ♘e7 22.♖ad1 ♗c4 23.♘ge4 ♕xe4 24.♘xe4 ♘g6 and play was equal, but White won in Spraggett-Gajewski, Calvia 2006) 15...c5 16.a3 (16.♘xe4 dxe4 17.♕xe4 ♕xe4 18.♖xe4 c4 was fine for Black in Fedorchuk-Gajewski, Warsaw Ech 2005. See SOS-6) 16...♘c6 17.♘xe4 ♕xe4



and Black is OK, as was borne out in recent practice: 18.dxc5 (or 18.♕xe4 dxe4 19.♖xe4 ♗d5 20.♖g4 f5! 21.exf6 ♕xf6 Erdogdu-Malaniuk, Arad 2006) 18...♕xc5 19.♕e3 ♕xe3 20.♖xe3 ♕xb1 21.♖xb1 d4 22.♖e4 ♗d5 23.♗d3 ♖fe8 24.♖be1 ♖bd8 25.b4 h6 26.♗d2 ♖e6 27.♗d3 ♖de8 28.♖c1 ♘xe5 29.♘xe5 ♖xe5 30.♖xd4 and draw agreed in Radulski-Gajewski, Cappelle la Grande 2007.

14...♘a5

Also playable is 14...♗d7 15.♘e3 ♕e6 16.♕c2 f5 17.exf6 ♕xf6 18.♘xd5 ♕xd5 19.♕xe4 ♕xe4 (19...♖bd8! is equal) 20.♖xe4 ♗d5 21.♗b3! ♗xb3 22.axb3 ♖fe8 23.♖xe8+ ♖xe8 24.♕e3 ♖d8 25.♖xa6 ♘xd4 and the game Stanojoski-Sowray, Dresden Ech 2007, ended eventually in a draw. White could have won now, though, with 26.♖xf6!.

15.♕c2

15.♕xd5! ♗xd5 (15...♘xf2!?) 16.♘e3 ♗d7 17.♘xf5 ♗xf5 18.♗c2 was given by Mikhailchishin in SOS-6.

15...c5

Naiditsch executes Black's main strategical idea: the ...c5 break.

16.dxc5 ♕xc5 17.♕e3 ♕b4! 18.♖e2 ♕g6



Black has an isolated pawn, but active pieces. Play in fact resembles the Open Spanish rather than the Closed. Let's see the rest of the game with some brief notes:

19.♘d4 ♕e7?! 20.f3 ♘g5 21.f4 ♕xc2 22.♖xc2 ♘e4 23.♘f5 ♖e8 24.♘xe7+ ♖xe7 25.♘d4 ♖c7 26.♖ac1 26.♖xc7 ♗xc7 27.♖c1 promises an edge. 26...♖bc8 Ready to exchange all rooks and inviting 27.♕b6!?



27...♖xc2! 28.♕xd8 ♖xc1 29.♗xd5 ♘c6! 30.♕h4 30.e6 ♘xd8 31.exf7+ (31.e7 ♘c6 32.♗xe4 ♖e8 is fine)

31...♖xf7 32.♗xe4 and Black's rooks are equal to White's queen and pawn.
30...♖c5 31.♗d2 ♖c4 32.♖e3 ♖xf4 33.♕f2 ♖d4 Now Black is clearly better.
34.♗e2 ♖e4 35.♗c2 ♖d4 36.♗d1 ♖ce6 37.♖h2 ♖xe5 Black is just winning. In the end he only manages a draw, and we may surely blame the FIDE tempo.
38.a4 h5 39.axb5 axb5 40.♗a1 ♖f5?! 41.b4? f6 41...♖xe3. 42.♗a6 ♖e8 43.♖xf5 ♖xf5 44.♗c6 ♖f7 45.♖c5 ♖xc5?! 46.bxc5 ♖e7 47.♗xb5 ♖c7 48.♗b3+ ♖e7 49.♗g3 ♖fxc5 50.♗xg7+ Now the game is drawn.
50...♖e6 51.♗g8+ ♖f5 52.h4 ♖e5 53.♖h3 ♖c3+ 54.g3 ♖c7 55.♖g2 ♖ee7 56.♖h3 ♖f7 57.♖g2 ♖cd7 58.♖h3 ♖g7 59.♗e8 ♖h7 60.♗g8 ♖de7 61.g4+ hxg4+ 62.♗xg4+ ♖e5 63.♗e2+ ♖d6 ½-½

Bayonet Attack or Hara-Kiri?

SOS-1, Chapter 4, p.40

In the fifth round of the 2006 Olympiad in Torino Norway met Finland. In this Scandinavian encounter grandmaster Einar Gausel quickly disposed of his opponent with an SOS. Or was it Tapani Sammalvuo who committed hara-kiri with his bayonet attack?

□ Tapani Sammalvuo

■ Einar Gausel

Turin Olympiad 2006

1.e4 e5 2.♖f3 ♖c6 3.♖c3 ♖f6 4.♖b5 ♖d6

An excellent SOS-way of combating the Spanish Four Knights. Black defends e5 and prepares to castle, followed by ...♖e8, ...♖f8 playing for ...d5.

5.g4

This bayonet attack is an original suggestion of Jan Pinski's in his book *The Four Knights* (2003). Pinski now recommended 5...♖c5 for Black, by the way.

The SOS Files of SOS-5 featured the game Böhnisch-Kortchnoi, Dresden 2006, which ran 5.a4 0-0 6.d3 ♖e8 7.♖c4 h6 and only after this move did White play 8.g4, when Kortchnoi responded in exemplary fashion with 8...♖b4! 9.g5 d5!. See SOS-5 for the details.

5...a6

This intermediate move looks no worse than Pinski's 5...♖c5. White cannot take on c6, as g4 would turn out to be a mere weakness.

6.♖c4 ♖c5 7.♖g5



Sammalvuo aims to capitalize on Black's decision to insert 5...a6 6.♖c4, by taking aim at f7. This primitive set-up meets with a strong response though. Also consistent was 7.g5, when 7...♖g4 8.♖f1 d6 9.h3?! ♖xf2 10.♖xf2 ♖xf2+ 11.♖xf2 ♖xh3 is better for Black. Best was perhaps 7.h3 d6 but that's not why you play 5.g4.

7...d5!

This counter measure in the centre is very strong. The knight on g5 is hanging in the air. Compare this to the above-mentioned game Böhnisch-Kortchnoi.

8.♖xd5

The alternatives are no better:

- 8. exd5 ♟xf2+ (8... ♟xg4!? 9. ♟ce4) 9. ♟xf2 (9. ♟f1 ♟a5 is also very good for Black) 9... ♟xg4+ and 10... ♟xg5 is winning.
- 8. ♟xd5 ♟xf2+ 9. ♟xf2 (9. ♟f1 ♟xd5—+) 9... ♟xg4+ 10. ♟f1 ♟xg5 and White is a pawn down and has no compensation for his bad king either!

8... ♟xd5

But not 8... ♟xf2+ 9. ♟xf2 ♟xg4+ 10. ♟f1 ♟xg5 11. h3 and suddenly White's pieces are well-coordinated.

9. exd5

Here 9. d4 ♟f4 is a real slugfest, where Black comes out on top in the end:



- 10. ♟xf7+ ♟f8 11. dxc5 (11. ♟xf4 exf4 12. ♟e6+ ♟xe6 13. ♟xe6 ♟xd4) 11... ♟xg5.
- 10. ♟xf7 ♟xd4 11. ♟xd4 ♟xd4.
- 10. ♟xf4 exf4 11. ♟xf7 ♟xd4 12. ♟xd4 ♟xd4 13. ♟xh8 ♟xc2+ 14. ♟d2 ♟xa1.

There is not much joy for White in 9. ♟xd5 ♟xg5 10. d4 ♟h4 11. dxc5 (11. ♟f3 ♟xd4 12. ♟xf7+ ♟d8—+) 11... ♟xg4 either.

9... ♟xg5 10. d4

White cannot take, since 10. dxc6 ♟f4! 11. ♟e2 ♟xf2+ wins on the spot. The text appears to retrieve material though.

10... ♟g6!

Possibly Sammalvuo overlooked this possibility? Black creates a powerful threat of his own (11... ♟c4+) which not exactly saves his

attacked pieces but leaves him with a winning attack nevertheless.

11. ♟d3 e4

Now White is forced to take both minor pieces.

12. dxc5

12. ♟e2 ♟xd4 wins.

12... exd3 13. dxc6 ♟e4+

This is the crux, White's king remains in the line of fire. The opposite-coloured bishops merely help to enhance Gausel's attack.

14. ♟d2 ♟xg4 15. ♟e1

15. cxb7 ♟d8 16. b8♟ and now Fritz likes to rub it in with 16... 0-0!, although other moves win easily too.

15... ♟e2



16. cxb7 ♟d8 and here Sammalvuo played 17. ♟xe2 and resigned before Gausel could respond with the obvious 17... dxe2+.

0-1

Player meets Author

SOS-5, Chapter 12, p.98

In SOS-5 Mark van der Werf wrote on the Improved London System (1. d4 d5 2. ♟f4). In this season's Dutch team championship he was able to use his knowledge, combined with fine tactical acumen, to good effect. A resounding win using a sacrificial idea of the late Tony Miles was the result.

The strength of this particular SOS is demonstrated by the fact that GMs Igor Miladinovic and Juan Bellon Lopez have recently also fallen victim to the same line. Apparently, they had not read SOS-5.

So, there is every reason to award the SOS Prize to Mark van der Werf. However, as the author of 'Bishop First: 1.d4 d5 2.♖f4', he is not eligible to personally receive the sum of € 250. In his professional life Van der Werf is manager of the Dutch Chess Federation. In this capacity he shall donate the money to a Dutch Chess in Schools project called 'SpeelZ'.

□ Mark van der Werf

■ Fitzgerald Krudde

Netherlands tt 2006/07

1.d4 d5 2.♖f4

In his article Van der Werf explains the advantages of developing the bishop first, whilst postponing the development of the king's knight. (The traditional London System runs 2.♖f3 and 3.♖f4.) Krudde now goes for the most active option.

2...c5 3.e3

There is something to be said in favour of the aggressive 3.e4!? as played by Winants, Rowson and (on occasion) McShane. See SOS-5.

3...♖c6

3...♖b6 4.♖c3 e6 5.♖b5 ♖a6 6.a4 favours White according to Van der Werf. Play resembles the Baltic Defence (1.d4 d5 2.c4 ♖f5) but with an important extra tempo.

4.c3 ♖b6

A normal move in all Queen's Pawn openings where the bishop has left the queenside. Here 4...e6 5.♖d2 ♖d6 6.♖xd6 ♖xd6 7.♖g4! Rowson-Haslinger, British Championship, Scarborough 2004, demonstrates one of the advantages of postponing the development of the g1-knight. Instead

4...♖f6 5.♖d2 ♖f5 6.♖g3 e6 7.♖b3 is more solid, but perhaps a tad better for White.

5.♖b3 c4

5...♖xb3 6.axb3 and in this ending White will get pressure on the queenside.

6.♖c2 ♖f5?



What could be more logical than to develop with tempo. Surely the bishop is immune following ...♖xb2?. Had both sides developed their king's knights then this would indeed have been the case. Now Van der Werf capitalizes on his knowledge with

7.♖xf5!

As played by Tony Miles against Ara Minasian in Ohrid 2001. White obtains a winning position directly from the opening! (The real honour ought to have gone to Faruk Bistic who first played this against Sveshnikov – sadly he lost the game.)

7...♖xb2 8.♖xd5 ♖xa1

There is not much joy in the alternatives:

– 8...♖f6?! 9.♖xc4 ♖e4? fails to 10.♖b5! ♖xf2+ (another recent addition to Black's catastrophic record with 6...♖f5? is 10...♖c1+ 11.♖e2 ♖c2+ 12.♖f3 g5 13.♖h3 f5 14.♖xg5 ♖d1+ 15.♖e2 ♖xh1 16.♖xb7 ♖d8 17.♖b5+ ♖f7 18.♖xf5+ ♖f6 and Black resigned without waiting for his opponent's reply in Bogosavljevic-Miladinovic, Serbian Championship, Vrsac 2007) 11.♖d1 a6 12.♖e2 e5 13.♖g3 ♖f6 14.♖f3

♖g6 15.♙c4 and White was just a piece up in Sedlak-Czebe, Subotica 2005.

– 8...♙c1+?! 9.♙e2 ♖b2+ 10.♙f3 (the king is actually no worse on f3 than on e1) 10...♙f6 11.♙xc4 ♖xa1 12.♙b3 0-0-0 13.♙b5 was Miles-Minasian, Ohrid 2001. Her majesty is trapped on a1. White has a winning advantage.

9.♙b5 0-0-0

9...a6 10.♙xb7 ♕d8 11.♙e4! and White has a big edge. Note that 11.♙b4 ♙c8 12.♙f3 ♙xa2 13.♙e5 e6 14.♙xc4 ♙xc4 15.♙xc4 ♙xb1+ 16.♙d2 ♙b5 was the unsuccessful stem game Bistic-Sveshnikov, Bled 1991. While 11.♙xa8 ♙xb1+ 12.♙e2 e5! is perhaps only a draw – see SOS-5.

10.♙xc4

White is hardly behind in material, and Black's queen is trapped on a1. Black has to act fast, so Krudde's next is forced

10...e5 11.♙e2!



This is best. The main idea behind 10...e5 was 11.♙xe5 ♙b4.

11...♙d6

11...exf4 12.0-0 and Black's queen will drop off according to Van der Werf in SOS-5!

Sadly, GM Bellon Lopez had not read these lines, as witness 12...fxe3 13.fxe3 ♕ge7 14.♙d2 a6 15.♙b6 ♕d5 16.♙xd5 ♙xf1+ 17.♙xf1 ♙xd5 18.c4 ♙f5+ 19.♙g1 ♙e7 20.♙e4 ♙b8 21.d5 ♙d8 22.♙b1 ♙a5 23.♙c5 ♙g5 24.♙d4 ♙a7 25.♙b4 ♙g6 26.♙d7 ♙e8 27.♙c5+ ♙b6 and White won in Hamark-Bellon Lopez, Stockholm 2006/07.

12.0-0 a6

White just wins after 12...exf4 13.♙d2.

13.♙b3 ♙a5 14.♙e6+!

Excellent! Also winning is 14.♙a4 exf4 15.♙xa5 ♙b2 16.♙xf4 ♙xf4 (16...♙e7 17.♙d3) 17.exf4 and Black's queen escapes, but White is no longer behind in material and positionally better.

14...fxe6

14...♙b8 15.♙b6 and 14...♙c7 15.♙a4 are no better.

15.♙xe6+ ♙d7

15...♙c7 16.♙xe5 ♙f6 17.♙e7+ ♙d7 18.♙xd6+ and White is winning on points, since 18...♙c6 is met by 19.d5+.

16.dxe5 ♙e7

The bishop must block the d-file, as 16...♙c7 17.♙d1 wins. So White wins another piece and gets a passer on d6.

17.exd6 ♙g6 18.♙g3

White is just winning. The rest is simple.

18...♙b2 19.♙d4 ♙d8 20.♙d5 ♙b6 21.♙d2 ♙e7 22.♙e4 ♙ec6 23.♙e6 ♙e8 24.♙b1 ♙a7 25.♙d5

There is a huge difference in activity between White's queen and Black's queen.

25...b6 26.♙c4 b5 27.♙xa5 ♙xa5 28.♙c5 ♙ed8 29.♙xd7 ♙xd7 30.♙d1 ♙b7 31.♙g8+ 1-0

CHAPTER 2

John van der Wiel

A Harmless Little Bishop Move



1.e4 e5 2.f3 c6 3.c3 f6 4.g2

In the 1980s 4.g2 was a surprise weapon of mine. It scored 5-1, no draws. Then it was put to rest, but recently I employed it again (after almost 22 years), managing to surprise two fellow countrymen with it. Current score: 6-2, still no draws.

As Black has good active responses to straightforward white play in the Four Knights (4.d4 exd4 5.fxd4 b4; 4.g4 c4 dxc4; 4.b5 d4), the move is quite logical by elimination. It develops a piece and aims to play d2-d4 at a more suitable moment, i.e. after 4...e7, 4...d6 or 4...g6. Usually it leads to very different positions than 4.a3, an elder SOS-move (see SOS-1, the very first chapter). For example, 4.a3 d5 5.b5!? is quite

another story than 4.g2 d5 5.exd5 cxd5 6.f0-0.

After the harmless looking 4.g2 I consider 4...d5 and 4...b4 to be Black's best replies. To 4...c5 there is the standard reaction 5.dxc5 in a very good version, see: 5...dxc5 6.d4 b4 7.dxe5 dxe4 8.fxd3 dxc3 9.bxc3 c7 10.g3 g6 11.bh6, with advantage for White in Van der Wiel-Kuijf, Dutch championship, Hilversum 1984.

The three games that I shall show you with Black's main moves, will be a personal account of my experiences with 4.g2. There are a few other adepts, too: Germany's Oliver Brendel and a much older one, Joseph Blackburne. I don't think that Blackburne

invented 4.♗e2, I suspect with such a name he invented the solarium, but we might call this the Blackburne Variation. Other great masters of the past who gave 4.♗e2 a try were: Paulsen, Lasker, Janowski, Teichmann and Nimzowitsch.

Knowing some of the intricacies of 4.♗e2, you may be able to forge it into a weapon, although admittedly it is not the refutation of 1...e5 and sometimes the work has to be done in an ending with a tiny plus. However, with zero draws out of eight games and my general drawing percentage being relatively high, 4.♗e2 cannot be so harmless now can it?

[Editorial note: Unfortunately a recent draw in the Dutch team competition is a small blemish on this clean sheet.]

□ John van der Wiel

■ Harmen Jonkman

Wijk aan Zee 2007

1.e4 e5 2.♖f3 ♘c6 3.♗c3 ♖f6 4.♗e2 ♗b4 5.♗d5



5...♗a5

A logical, but already highly unusual move. 5...♗xe4 6.♗xb4 ♗xb4 7.d3 ♖f6 8.♗xe5 gave White two bishops and a nice edge in Van der Wiel-Day, Grand Manan 1984. Somewhat more reliable is 5...♗c7, as in

Blackburne-Tarrasch, Ostend 1905 (among others), when 6.d3 d6 7.♗xe7 ♗xe7 still earns White the bishop pair, in a more closed position.

6.c3!?

Instead 6.♗xf6+ ♗xf6 looks equal. 6.♗c4?! would produce a well-known position with reversed colours. White's bishop is already developed, though, and there are better options (one of which is 6.0-0).

6...♗xe4

The bravest and most principled. On the solid 6...d6:

– 7.d3 ♗xd5 8.exd5 ♖e7 9.♗a4+ c6 is absolutely nothing for White.

– 7.b4 ♗b6 8.a4 ♗xe4 and 7.d4 exd4 8.♗g5 dxc3 aren't easily justified.

– 7.♗a4! ♗d7 8.d3 ♗b6 9.♗xb6 (unfortunately, 9.♗g5 ♖e7! fails to convince) 9...axb6 10.♗c2 gives White two bishops and a mini-plus.

7.d3 ♖f6 8.♗g5 d6 9.♗d2! ♗e6



10.♗xf6?!

Aiming for a positional bind, but here White misses a good chance: 10.♗xf6+! gxf6 11.♗b4 d5 (12.♖e4 was threatened) 12.0-0, with f2-f4 coming up. This plan is very hard to counteract (12...♗b6 13.♗h1) and extremely dangerous for Black.

10...gxf6 11.♗f3 ♗b6 12.♗c4

12.♗a4 f5 or 12...0-0 is fine for Black.

12...♖b8!?

Here 12...0-0 13.a4 ♗xd5 14.♗xd5 ♖e7 15.♗xb7 ♜b8 and d6-d5 would be satisfactory for Black, but even the strange-looking text turns out to be playable.

13.♞a4+ ♗d7

After 13...♗d7 14.♖cxb6 cxb6 15.d4 or 15.0-0-0 White has at least enough compensation.

14.♞a3 ♖a6! 15.b4

This could lead to a draw, but at this point I couldn't find anything better. 15.♖dxb6?! axb6 16.♗xb7 ♜a7 would be welcomed by Black.



15...0-0 16.♞c1 c6

This forces events. Instead 16...♖g7 was a reasonable alternative.

17.♖dxb6 axb6 18.♖xd6 ♗e6! 19.♞h6

Rather than 19.♖e4 f5 (20.♞h6 f6) which might invite trouble for White.

19...♞xd6 20.♗e4 ♜fd8

The easiest path to a draw is 20...f5! 21.♗xf5 ♜fd8 22.♗xh7+ ♖h8 23.♗e4+ ♖g8. As Black intends to chase both attacking pieces with ♗e6-d5, White will soon have to resort to perpetual check.

21.♗xh7+ ♖h8 22.♗e4+ ♖g8 23.g4!

As 23.h4 f5 24.♜h3 f4! gets White nowhere. After the text Black is obliged to return the piece.



23...♖xb4! 24.cxb4

Neither 24.♜g1 ♖xd3+ nor 24.♜d1 ♖d5 are any good.

24...♞xb4+ 25.♖f1 ♗d5??

So close to home, Black falters. 25...♞b2! 26.♜e1 (or 26.♖g2 ♗d5) 26...♜xa2 attacks f2 and thus forces the draw.

26.♗h7+ ♖h8 27.♗f5+ ♖g8 28.♗h7+ ♖h8 29.♗f5+ ♖g8 30.g5!



Suddenly Black is left defenceless, for 30...fxg5 and 30...♞f4 both run into 31.♜g1.

30...♜d4 31.♜e1 e4

Or 31...♜xa2 32.♞h7+ ♖f8 33.♞h8+ ♖e7 34.♞xf6+ ♖e8 35.♜xe5+ ♗c6 36.♜xc6+! fxe6 37.♗g6+ and Black loses.

32.♗h7+ ♖h8 33.♗xe4+ ♖g8 34.♗h7+ 1-0

And Black resigns with 34...♖h8 35.♗g6/f5+ ♖g8 36.♞h7+ and 37.♞h8 mate coming up.

So after 4...♖b4 5.♘d5 White always seems to have some chances: either two bishops or some activity. Against 4...d5 his theoretical task may be harder.

□ John van der Wiel

■ Jan Timman

Wijk aan Zee 1985

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗c3 ♗f6 4.♙e2 d5 5.exd5 ♗xd5 6.0-0 ♗xc3 7.bxc3 ♘d6

For 7...e4 see the next game.



8.d4

Here 8.♙b5 would mean a Scotch Four Knights with reversed colours.

8...0-0 9.♖b1

9.♞e1 merits investigation, but the text looks a bit more precise.

9...h6(!)

A most reliable set-up. Another good move is 9...b6, when 10.♘g5 ♙e7 is adequate for Black, e.g. 11.♙f3 ♘d7 12.dxe5 ♙xe5 13.♙xg5 ♗xg5 14.♗xd7 ♗xe5 etc. However, 10.♞e1! is more testing. Black would like to have ...c5-c4 without being disturbed by ♗f3-g5. Finally, 9...♗f6 is a little shakier in view of 10.d5, followed by 11.♙g5 or ♘g5.

10.dxe5

Not an impressive-looking move, but it is hard to find anything else.

10...♗xe5 11.♗xe5 ♙xe5



12.♙a3?

As Timman rightly indicated, 12.♙f3 should have been selected. There may follow: 12...♙b8 (12...♗xc3!?) 13.♙a3 and now not 13...♙e8? 14.♙c6!, but 13...♙d6 14.♙xd6 ♗xd6 15.♗xd6 cxd6 16.♙fd1 ♙d8. This ending looks like a dead draw, but if you dig a little deeper, you might conclude that White has something to play for, starting with 17.♙d4!

12...♙e8 13.♙f3 ♗h4!

Black already seizes the initiative.

14.g3 ♗a4 15.♗c1 ♙xc3 16.♙xb7 ♙h3

Timman criticizes this move, saying Black has a big advantage after 16...♙xb7 17.♙xb7 ♙a5!. If 18.♙b3 (18.♙c5? ♗c6) then 18...♙e1. This is indisputably true, but maybe White can put up a fight with 18.c4!? ♙b6 19.c5 ♗c6 20.cxb6 ♗xb7 21.bxc7 and now 21...♙ac8 22.♙d6 or 21...♙e6 22.♙d1.



17. ♖b2!

After 17. ♖xa8?! ♚xa8 Black threatens ♜a4-e4, which gives White all sorts of trouble. For instance:

- 18. ♜e3 ♜xa3 and White can't capitalize on the third rank situation (19. ♚b3 ♜a6!), or
 - 18. ♖b2 ♜c6! 19. f3 ♖xf1 20. ♜xf1 (20... ♖xc3 ♜xf3) 20... ♜b6+ and Black wins.
- 17... ♖xb2 18. ♚xb2 ♚ad8 19. ♖g2 ♖xg2 20. ♖xg2 ♚e2 21. c3**

Another reasonable try is 21. ♜f4, but 21... ♜xf4 22. gxf4 a6! may then spell trouble. Anyhow, after the text White is only slightly worse.

21... ♚de8 22. ♚d2 a5 23. ♜b2

According to Timman White should have preferred 23. ♚fd1 ♜e4+ 24. ♖g1 ♜f3 25. ♚f1. I am not sure though: after 25...h5 or first...f6 Black's forces still look menacing.

23... ♜c6+ 24. ♖g1 ♜c4!**25. a3?**

This wasn't my best game ever. Instead of the disastrous text White should have attempted 25. ♚xe2 (25. ♖g2!?) 25... ♚xe2 26. ♜b3 ♜xb3 27. axb3 ♚b2. Here Timman gives 28. b4 axb4 29. cxb4 ♚xb4 30. ♚c1 ♚b7, which I believe Black should win in the long run, moving his king towards the c-pawn. There is a more exact method, though: 28. ♚a1 ♚xb3 29. ♚xa5 ♚xc3 30. ♚a8+! ♜h7 31. ♚c8, when Black's rook is less effective and White's ac-

tive one is also eyeing the kingside, seriously improving the drawing chances.

25... ♚e1!

With a killing attack.

26. ♚xe1 ♚xe1+ 27. ♖g2 ♜f1+ 28. ♖f3 ♜h1+ 29. ♖g4 f5+! 30. ♖h3

Or 30. ♖xf5 ♜f3+.

30... ♜f1+

0-1

Intending 31. ♖h4 g5+ 32. ♖h5 ♜h3+ 33. ♖g6 ♚e6 mate!

Now you know the downside of the story, but also the possible improvement starting with 12. ♖f3. The following game was played one month later.

□ John van der Wiel

■ Artur Yusupov

Reykjavik 1985

1. e4 e5 2. ♖f3 ♖c6 3. ♖c3 ♖f6 4. ♚e2 d5 5. exd5 ♖xd5 6. 0-0 ♖xc3 7. bxc3 e4 8. ♖d4

A (usually temporary) pawn sac, as 8. ♖c1 ♖c5 or ...♖d6 is too modest.

**8... ♖xd4 9. cxd4 ♜xd4 10. c3!**

This position can also be reached with reversed colours (and the pawn on a3) from the older 4.a3 SOS-line, the Gunsberg Variation: 4... ♚e7 5. d4 etc. After 5...exd4 6. ♖xd4 0-0 7. ♖xc6 bxc6 8. e5 ♖d5 9. ♖xd5 cxd5

10. ♖xd5, Hebden-Ady, London 1986, continued 10... ♖b8?! 11. ♗d3 d6 12. 0-0 ♗b7 13. ♖d4 dxe5 14. ♖xe5 ♗f6 15. ♖g3 ♗e8 16. ♗f4! and Black had no compensation. To be honest, I believe that on 10. ♖b1 in my game 10... ♗c5! 11. ♗b2 ♖d6 would be even stronger.

10... ♖d5

10... ♖e5!? 11. d4 exd3 12. ♗e1! gives White good chances, as does 11... ♖e6 12. f3 in this line.

11.d3



11... ♗d6

11... exd3 12. ♗f3 would be ill-advised, but otherwise Black has a range of choices, see: – 11... ♗c5 12. dxe4 ♖xd1 13. ♖xd1 ♗e6 14. ♗f4 ♗c8 (14... ♗b6 15. a4 a5 16. ♖ab1 with some advantage for White. ♗f4-e5-d4 is often the plan) 15. a4! ♗e7 16. ♖db1 b6 17. ♗a6 ♗cd8 18. ♗xc7 ♗d2 19. ♖f1 was Van der Wiel-Scheeren, Dutch league 1984/85. White is a little better and went on to win from there.

– 11... ♗d7 12. dxe4 ♖xd1 13. ♖xd1 ♗c6 (13... 0-0-0!? 14. ♗e3 may cause Black some problems and 13... ♗d6 14. ♗e3 discourages both castling options) 14. ♗f4 and White's better development gives him an edge.

– 11... ♗f5 12. dxe4 ♖xd1 (12... ♗xe4!? 13. ♖a4+) 13. ♗xd1 ♗e6 (not 13... ♗xe4 14. ♗e1 0-0-0 15. ♗g4+ f5 16. ♗g5! and

White will win material) 14. ♗e3 and I would mildly prefer White. It may be hard to believe that Black cannot fully equalize with an uncompromised pawn structure, but White has some centre, good development and good pieces, which makes him a slight favourite in my view.

The same holds for the text though.

12.dxe4 ♖xd1

12... ♖xe4 13. ♗b5+ ♗d8 14. ♗e1 would be a risky choice. More reliable is 12... ♖e5!? 13. g3 0-0 (13... ♗h3?! 14. ♖a4+), which could be called unclear.

13. ♖xd1 0-0 14. ♗e3 ♗e6 15. a4!

This way, rather than having a weakish a-pawn, White can use it to keep some pressure on Black's position, like in a minority attack. An important point is 15... a5 16. ♖ab1 b6 17. ♗xb6!.

15... ♖fd8 16. a5 b6 17. f4 f6 18. ♗f2 ♖ab8 19. ♖d2

White has a slight spatial advantage.

19... ♗f8 20. g4?!

It is hard to foresee why, but this is a mistake. White should have elected 20. h4, also part of the general plan of advancing the majority. Note the instructive neo-socialist system: first a clever individual leads the way (a2-a4-a5), later the masses can follow. The difference with 20. g4 I will show you later.



20... bxa5!!

Very alert play by Yusupov, who was already 3-0 up against me back then.

21. ♖xa5 ♜b3 22. ♜c2?!

An important reason behind Black's 20th is that 22.e5 fxe5 23.fxe5 ♗e7 24.♜xd8+ ♗xd8 25.♜xa7 (threatening 26.♜a8) runs into 25...♗h4+! and only then 26...♜xc3. With white pawns on h4 (en prise!) and g2, see the comment to move 20, the same line would lead to White winning the c-pawn after 25...♗h4+ 26.g3.

Like 22.e5, the text is no good either. White should have played for a draw by means of 22.♜xa7 ♜xc3 23.e5 fxe5 24.fxe5 ♜xc3! 25.exd6 ♜c3 26.♞d3! (or 26.♜a6).

22... ♜a3!

With a diabolical idea: 23.♜xa3 ♗xa3 24.♗xa7? ♗b3, trapping White's rook!

23. ♜h5 ♖g8

Here 23...h6 24.♗c5 would alleviate White's task, but 23...♗b3, intending 24.♜c1 ♜a2 or 24.♞d2 ♗f7 25.♜xh7 ♖g8 was very interesting.

24.c4!

Now 24.♗c5 ♜a5! 25.♗xd6 ♜xh5 26.♗xc7?! ♜xh2+ gives Black a big advantage.

24... ♗b4 25. ♜b5 a5(?!)

The complicated way, where 25...♗e1+ 26.♖xe1 ♜xe3 27.f5 would have been somewhat better for Black.

26.c5 ♜a2?

This is too slow and soon Black will find himself in trouble. Correct was 26...♗b3!, after which the main line goes: 27.c6 a4 28.♜b7 ♗d6 (28...a3 29.f5! ♗f7 30.♜xc7 leads to hair-raising complications that favour White and can be found in New In Chess Magazine 1985/6 or New In Chess Yearbook 3) 29.♗c4! ♗xc4 30.♜xc4 ♜a8 31.♜xa4 ♜xa4 32.♜xb3 ♜xc4 33.♜b8+ ♖f7 34.♞d8 and a draw becomes inevitable.

27. ♜xa2 ♗xa2 28. ♜b7 ♗d7?!

Better chances of salvation were offered by 28...c6 29.♜b6 ♗f7 (29...♜c8 or ♜a8

30.♗a6!), although White is clearly better after 30.♜xc6 a4 31.♜b6.

29. ♗b5!

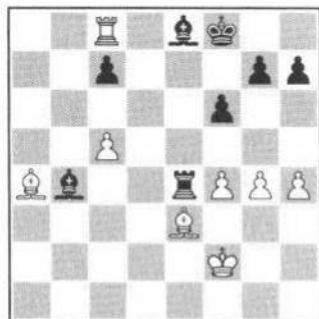
Watch this bishop.

29... ♗e7 30. ♗c6 White fully dominates the scene. **30... ♖f8 31.h4 ♗f7?!**

32. ♜b8+ ♗e8 33. ♜c8 a4

A desperate attempt. If 33...♖f7, then 34.♗d5+! ♖f8 35.♗d4 or 35.h5 is probably even stronger than anything else.

34. ♗xa4 ♜xe4



35. ♗c2! ♗e7

Of course 35...♜xe3 36.♖xe3 ♗xc5+ 37.♖f3 offers no hope, as 38.♗a4, 38.♜xc7 and 38.♗xh7 are threatened.

36. ♗xh7 ♖f7 36...g5 37. ♗g6 gxf4 38. ♗d4 leaves Black defenceless.

37.h5! ♗c6 On 37...♖e6 the most convincing way is 38.♞d8!. **38. ♗g8** mate



Hey, wasn't that our harmless little bishop?

CHAPTER 3

Jeroen Bosch

Sicilian: the O'Kelly Variation



1.e4 c5 2.f3 a6

I had some doubts about including the O'Kelly Sicilian in the SOS series. On the one hand, 2...a6 fits perfectly into the SOS format. Moving the rook-pawn neither contributes to Black's development nor to his central influence, so it is a typical non-standard move that characterizes so many SOS lines. (Of course ...a6 is useful in almost every Sicilian line.)

Moreover, it is highly annoying for loads and loads of players. The 3.f3 variations are obviously out, and more surprisingly so are the Open Sicilians in a way – for 3.d4 (arguably best against the respectable 2...d6, 2...c6 and 2...e6) allows Black to get the best of all Sicilian worlds with

3...cxd4 4.f3 dxf6 5.c3 e5.

Indeed, many strong grandmasters have played the O'Kelly and continue to do so with considerable success. On top of all that I have played a few games on the black side myself and never experienced any problems in the opening.

So why my hesitation to include 2...a6 in the SOS-series? First of all, it could be argued that the O'Kelly is in a way too mainstream. Indeed, John Nunn devoted a separate chapter to it in his *Beating the Sicilian* (although, admittedly, the chapter was brief and he expressed his doubts whether a full chapter was necessary). True, the more recent *Bashing the Sicilian* book (*Experts vs. the Sicil-*

ian) relegates 2...a6 to a chapter called Minor Lines. However, Khalifman in his *Opening for White according to Anand* series (see volume 8) devotes almost 70 pages to it!

More importantly, though, I feel that 2...a6 is a very useful weapon to include in your armoury if, and perhaps only if, you can back it up with another Sicilian (especially the Kan Variation). I shall argue below why I think that this is the case. Incidentally, John Emms arrived at the same conclusion at the end of his chapter on the O'Kelly in *Dangerous Weapons: the Sicilian* (Everyman 2006, written together with Richard Palliser). So this is the real downside from a SOS point of view. To play a more or less unorthodox opening you need to have at least some basic knowledge of a very respectable one as well. In the end, I decided that the virtues of the O'Kelly outweighed this and turned the scales in favour of its treatment here. For, mind you, facing the O'Kelly as White is very unpleasant for many players of the Open Sicilian.

Considering the above justification it should not surprise you that the set-up of this chapter is a little different. In certain cases I will analyse and explain typical variations as is customary, but at other times I will only give a few illustrative lines and indicate what are, in my view, the best transpositional options. I will even direct you to other SOS chapters. First we will start though with a game of our eponymous hero.

□ Jan Sefc

■ Alberic O'Kelly de Galway

Trencianske Teplice 1949

1.e4 c5 2.♟f3 a6

Belgian grandmaster O'Kelly (or more correctly O'Kelly de Galway which is too long

for an opening variation but goes well with the title of count that he carried and with his none too common first name of Alberic) played 2...a6 a couple of times halfway through the twentieth century. He was not the first to play 2...a6 and he certainly didn't dab into it too frequently, but as a strong player he did realize why 2...a6 defused 3.d4:

3.d4

So White 'falls for it'! While White is not worse after the automatic 3.d4 he does lose the initiative. Interestingly, 3.d4 is played in over a third of all games with the O'Kelly in the Megabase 2007.

3...cxd4 4.♟xd4 ♟f6

The immediate 4...e5 is also good.

5.♟c3

Meek is 5.♟d3 because of 5...♟c6 (5...e5 is of course also good) when after 6.♟xc6 Black can equalize with 6...dxc6 followed by 7...e5.

However, more interesting is 6...bxc6 which was O'Kelly's own choice against Poulsen at the Dubrovnik Olympiad (1950). The game went: 7.0-0 e5 8.c4 ♟c5 9.♟c3 d6 10.♟b1 (10.♟f3 ♟d7 11.♟e3 0-0 12.♟fd1 ♟b8 13.b3 ♟d4! Stoliar-Spassky, Leningrad 1957) 10...♟b8 11.♟g5 0-0 12.♟h1 h6 13.♟h4 g5! 14.♟g3 h5!? 15.h4? (15.f3) 15...♟g4! 16.♟d2 gxh4 17.♟h2 ♟f6 18.♟d1 h3! and Black had achieved a won position.

5...e5!

If you hold a somewhat negative view of the O'Kelly then you will say that this advance is the whole (and single) point of 2...a6. Of course Black can play the Najdorf (5...d6) here, but the text is much more vigorous. Black fully utilizes his control over the b5-square with this thrust in the centre. It is important that his dark-squared bishop is not yet hemmed in by his own pawns and can freely move to b4 or c5.

6.♟f3

Note that 6.♘f5 is adequately met by 6...d5. If 6.♘b3 then Black plays 6...♗b4 as in our present game, while in case of 6.♗de2 (over-protecting c3) Black should go for the a7-f2 diagonal with 6...♗c5.

6...♗b4



7.♗c4!

The best move under the circumstances. We will look at some of the alternatives below.

7...♖c7!

Most accurate. Possible is 7...0-0 but not 7...♗xe4? because of 8.♖d5 or even 8.0-0.

8.♖d3

Or 8.♗b3 d6 (8...♗xc3+ 9.bxc3 ♖xc3+ 10.♗d2 ♖c5 11.0-0 is supposed to give White compensation for the pawn. Russian grandmaster Pavel Tregubov nevertheless went for this and obtained an excellent position after 11...0-0 12.a4?! d6 13.♗e3 ♖c7 14.♗d2 ♗c6 15.c4? ♗bd7 Braslavsky-Tregubov, Tomsk 1998) 9.0-0 ♗xc3 10.bxc3 and now 10...♗bd7 is somewhat better for Black.

8...b5

Black can keep ...b5 in reserve with 8...d6.

9.♗b3 d6

This is more accurate than 9...♗b7 10.♗d2 d6 11.♗d5 ♗xd5 12.♗xd5 ♗xd2+ 13.♖xd2 ♗c6 and White was slightly better, but lost, in T.Ernst-Csom, Gausdal 1993.

10.♗d2

10.0-0 is well-met by 10...♗xc3 11.bxc3 ♗bd7 12.♗d1 ♗c5 13.♖xd6 ♖xd6 14.♗xd6 ♗xe4 Kupreichik-Csom, Lenk 1991.

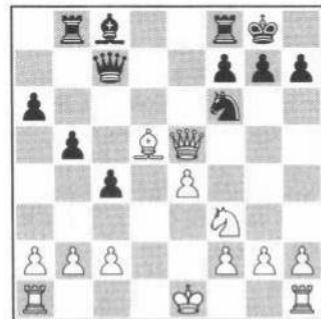
10...♗xc3! 11.♗xc3 ♗bd7

Black has given up the bishop pair, but with White's poor coordination this is no problem. Note how easy Black has achieved all of his Sicilian (Najdorf) moves.

12.♗b4 ♗c5 13.♗xc5 dxc5 14.♗d5

c4 Alternatives are 14...♗b7 and 14...♗b8.

15.♖d2 ♗b8 16.♖g5!? 0-0 17.♖xe5



17...♖xe5?!

Best was 17...♗xd5! 18.♖xd5 ♗b7 and Black is better.

18.♗xe5 ♗xd5 19.♗c6!

Possibly O'Kelly had overlooked this intermediate move?

19...♗b4! 20.♗xb4 ♗b7 21.0-0-0 ♗xe4 22.f3 ♗b7

Play is equal and the game ended in a draw.

Now that we have glimpsed how easy life can be in the O'Kelly for Black it is time to make a theoretical investigation. First I will briefly deal with some minor lines after 2...a6:

● **3.d3.** Playing for a King's Indian set-up in advance is always possible (but not so ambitious) of course. After 2...e6 3.d3 is fairly popular (since playing ...e5 will now cost a tempo). By comparison 2...a6 may not be the

most useful move against such a KI set-up, but ...e5 can still be played in one go. A sample line runs: 3...dxc6 Quite feasible (and in line with 2...a6) is also 3...b5 4.g3 b7 5.g2 d6. 4.g3 g6 5.g2 g7 6.0-0 d6 7.dbd2 e5 Or 7...f6. 8.c3 g7 9.a3 0-0 10.b4 h6 And Black is fine.

● 3.g3 This may lead to similar play as 3.d3 after 3...dxc6. Black may also play 3...b5 4.g2 b7 5.d3 d6 once again. While Hungarian grandmaster Istvan Csom prefers the more restrained 3...b6, when his games typically continue with 4.g2 b7 5.d3 e6 6.0-0 e7 followed by ...d6, ...f6, ...dxc6, ...0-0, ...c7 with a very healthy set-up. Csom is actually the grandmaster with the most O'Kelly games to his credit.

● 3.b3 Here too Black has nothing to worry about. 3...d6 4.b2 f6 is fine, for example: 5.e5 dxe5 6.dxe5 b7 7.xd7 xxd7 8.e2 Or 8.a3 b5 9.c4 b6 10.e2 xc6 11.f3 d8 12.0-0 e6 Monroy-Vl.Georgiev, Guingamp 2000. 8...e6 9.0-0 c7 10.a4 d6 11.h3 h2+ 12.h1 e5 13.c3 d8 14.f3 xc6 With a good position for Black in Khaetsky-Strelnikov, Kharkov 2000.

● 3.b4 The Sicilian Wing Gambit is dubious, but it increases somewhat in strength versus 2...a6. Now, refusing the gambit with 3...d6 is entirely possible, but so is accepting with 3...cxb4. Now a recent Eingorn game went: 4.xc4? e6 5.e2 f6 6.b2 xe4! 7.xe4 d5 8.xd5 xd5 9.xd5 exd5 10.a3 xc6 and White did not have enough compensation in Chizelle-Eingorn, Metz 2007. On the fourth move White should play 4.a3 (4.d4 d5). Now Black can take on a3 and play 5...d6 and ...f6, but O'Kelly expert Csom has played 4...b5 (following in the footsteps of Ljubojevic) when after 5.d4 (5.axb4 b7 6.c4 - 6.d3!? - 6...bxc4 7.xc4 e6 was the earlier Planinc-Ljubojevic, Yugoslavia 1970) 5...b7 6.d3 f6 7.e2 e6 8.0-0 d5 9.dbd2 dxe4

10.xe4 b7 11.axb4 xe4 12.xe4 xe4 13.xe4 e7 14.e5 0-0 the players agreed a draw in McDonald-Csom, Budapest 1996.

I have divided the material as follows:

- I 3.d4
- II 3.dxc3
- III 3.c3
- IV 3.c4

Variation I

3.d4

We briefly discussed this in Sefc-O'Kelly. Here we will look at the main theoretical options following

3...cxd4 4.dxd4 f6 5.dxc3 e5

We will not go into 4...e5 as played for instance by Taimanov and Ljubojevic since 4...f6 and 5...e5 is more forcing.

On move 4 White also has 4.c3 to go for a Morra Gambit. However, 4...dxc3 5.xc3 will just lead to a normal Morra which is nothing to write home about for White. While 4.xd4 xc6 followed by 5...d6 is a normal line in the Hungarian Variation.



- A 6.f5
- B 6.de2
- C 6.b3
- D 6.f3

Subvariation A**6.♟f5**

This gives Black the opportunity to realize all the active moves in the position: ...d5 and ...♟b4.

6...d5 7.♟g5

No better is 7.♟g3 d4 or 7...♟b4.

7...♟xf5

Or 7...d4 8.♟xf6 gxf6 (this is probably better than 8...♟xf6 9.♟d5 ♖d8 10.♟c4 which is about equal) 9.♟b1 ♟xf5 (sound alternatives are 9...♟c6 and 9...♟b6) 10.exf5 ♟c6 11.♟c4 ♟b4+ 12.♟d2 ♖a5 13.a3 ♟xd2+ 14.♟xd2 ♟xd2+ 15.♟xd2 ♜c8 16.g4 h5 and Black was slightly better in Zygoris-Zahariev, Hania 1992.

8.exf5

Here 8.♟xf6 gxf6 (8...♟xf6? 9.♟xd5) 9.exf5 ♟b4 is excellent for Black too. For example: 10.a3 ♟xc3+ 11.bxc3 ♖a5 12.♟d2 ♟c6 13.c4 ♟xd2+ 14.♟xd2 0-0-0 ♖ Morgentaler-Zalys, Montreal 1980.

8...♟b4

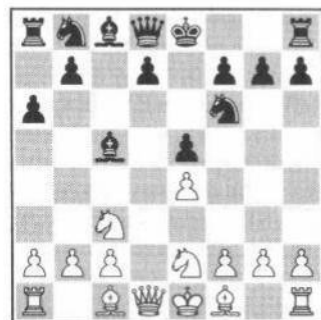
9.♟d2 ♟c6 10.a3 ♟c5 Also good is 10...♟xc3 11.♟xc3 ♟e4 12.♟d3 ♟xc3 13.bxc3 ♟g5 14.0-0 e4 15.♖e1 0-0 16.♟e2 ♟xf5 ♖ Muralidharan-Ravichandran, Chennai 2000. **11.♟g5? ♟b6! 12.♟d2 ♟xf2+! 13.♟xf2 ♟xb2 14.♟b1 ♟xc3+ 15.♟d2 ♟xd2+ 16.♟xd2 0-0-0** And Black won in Dimitrov-Simeonov, Sofia rapid 2004.

Subvariation B**6.♟de2**

Now that White has overprotected c3 it makes sense to play

6...♟c5

Csom has played 6...d6 here, when Black is playing a kind of (satisfactory) Najdorf.

**7.♟g3**

Both Mednis and Martin Pribyl have played the odd-looking 7.♟e3 here, which in my opinion is the best move in the position. After 7...♟xe3 8.fxe3 White controls some important squares in return for his doubled e-pawns.

7...d6 8.♟e2

Certainly not 8.♟c4 ♟g4 9.0-0?? (9.♟f1) 9...♟h4 10.h3 ♟xf2 11.♟xf2 ♟xg3 12.♟xf7+ ♟f8 0-1 Shigarev-Bondarenko, Moscow 1996.

8...0-0

8...♟e6 9.0-0-0 10.♟h1 d5 with equal play in Koch-Euwc, Berlin 1950.

9.0-0 ♟c6 10.♟d5

Alternatively, 10.♟g5 h6 11.♟xf6 ♟xf6 is about equal too.

10...♟xd5 11.exd5 ♟e7 12.♟h1 f5

And Black was OK in Cabrera Galeano-Khamrakulov, La Roda 2007.

Subvariation C**6.♟b3 ♟b4**

Now White must make up his mind how to protect the e4-pawn and how to react to the upcoming ...d5 advance.

7. d2

This passive move is possibly best. White avoids the fracturing of his pawn structure, which is not very ambitious, but given the concrete situation White should already be careful not to end up in a statically worse position. To back this up, here are some alternative lines:

- 7. d3. Most natural, but Black achieves an easy game with 7...d5 8.exd5 (8.0-0 ♖xc3 9.hxc3 dxe4 10.♗e2 ♛c7 gives no compensation for the material and structural deficit, Pradas Soria-Khamrakulov, Valencia 2001) 8...♗xd5



(Dorfman's move is even better than 8...d5, when Emms recommends 9.0-0-9.♗d2 ♖xc3 10.bxc3 ♗d6 11.0-0-9...♖xc3 10.bxc3 ♗xc3 11.♗a3 which has been played a few times too) 9.0-0 ♖xc3 10.bxc3 0-0 11.c4 ♛c6 12.♗b2 (or 12.♗g5 ♖bd7 and as Dorfman writes in *The Method in Chess*: 'White has nothing to compensate his static deficit') 12...♗e8 13.♗e1 ♖bd7 14.♗d2 b6 15.♗g5 h6 16.♗h4 ♗b7 17.f3 a5 and Black was clearly better in Scheidegger-Dorfman, Cannes 1993.

- 7. ♗c4 is met by 7...♗c7! 8.♗d5 (8.♗d3 b5 9.♗d5 ♖xd5 10.exd5 and Black achieved

a clear positional edge with 10...♗xc3+ 11.bxc3 d6 12.0-0-0 13.a4 ♗d7 14.a5 ♗c8 15.♗e1 ♗e8 16.♗a3 ♖d7 Pineault-Hebert, Montreal 1983) 8...♖xd5 9.♗xd5 d6



Nikolaïdis was twice successful from this position:

- 10.♗d2 ♗e6 11.♗d3 ♖c6 12.0-0 ♖xc3 13.♗xc3 0-0 14.♗ad1 ♗ad8 15.f4 f6 16.fxe5 dxe5 17.♗e3 b6 18.♖c1 a5 19.a3 ♗a7! with a clear edge, Bogdanos-Nikolaïdis, Athens 1994.

- 10.0-0 ♗e6 11.♗d3 ♗xc3 12.bxc3 ♗c4 13.♗g3 ♗xf1 14.♗xg7 ♗f8 15.♗h6 ♖d7 16.♗xf1 0-0-0 and Black was winning in Tsintsar-Nikolaïdis, Aegina 1995.

- 7.♗d3 d5 8.exd5 ♖xd5 (8...♗xd5) 9.♗d2 ♖xc3 10.bxc3 ♗d6 11.♗e2 ♗c7 12.c4 ♖d7 13.♗f3 ♖c5 14.♖xc5 ♗xc5 15.♗d5 was about equal in Platt-O'Kelly de Galway, Trencianske Teplice 1949.

- 7.♗g5 h6 8.♗xf6 ♗xc3+! 9.bxc3 ♗xf6 10.♗d3 0-0 11.a4 d6 12.♗d1 ♗d8 13.♗e3 ♖c6 14.c4 ♗e6 with a positional edge in Papastavropoulos-Grivas, Athens 1996.

7...0-0

In a previous effort Khamrakulov had played the weaker 7...d6 8.♗d3 0-0 9.0-0 ♖bd7 10.f4 exf4 11.♗xf4 ♗xc3 12.bxc3 ♖c5 13.♗g5 and White was slightly better in Prieto Busto-Khamrakulov, Gijon 2003.

8.♗d3 ♖c6

Or the immediate 8...♗xc3 9.♗xc3 d5 10.exd5 and Black has easy equality after both 10...♖xd5 and 10...♗xd5.

9.0-0

Play is equal after 9.♗d5 ♗xd2+ 10.♖xd2 d6.

9...♗xc3 10.bxc3?

Correct was 10.♗xc3 d5.

10...d6



Having given up his bishop pair Khamrakulov keeps the position closed. Nevertheless, 10...d5 was good too.

11.♗g5?! h6 12.♗h4 ♗e6 13.♖e2 ♜c8 Black has an excellent position. White's next blunders an exchange.

14.♗c4? ♗d4 15.cxd4 ♗xc4

And Black won in Navarro-Khamrakulov, Benidorm 2007.

Subvariation D

6.♗f3

This looks better than 6.♗b3, but Black still has

6...♗b4

to try and grasp the initiative. White should ignore the threat to his e-pawn with

7.♗c4

Here 7.♗xe5 is simply met by 7...0-0! 8.♗d3 d5 9.0-0 ♗xc3 10.bxc3 dxe4 and Black was already better in Keres-F.Olafsson, Yugoslavia 1959.

Black is very comfortable after 7.♗g5 d6 8.♗c4 h6 9.♗d2 ♗bd7 10.♗d5 ♗xd5

11.♗xd5 ♗c5 and now 12.b4?! ♗b6 13.♖e2 ♗f6 14.♗b3 ♗e6+ did not improve matters. Smyslov-H.Müller, Venice 1950.

Note that 7.♗d3 is actually worse here than after 6.♗b3 because of 7...d5 8.exd5? e4 9.♗xe4 ♗xe4 10.♖e2 0-0 and Black wins a piece.

The passive 7.♗d2 can be answered by 7...d6, when Black is fine in all lines. For example:

– 8.♗d5 ♗xd5 9.exd5 ♗xd2+ 10.♖xd2 0-0 11.♗e2 f5 S.Roth-Khamrakulov, Oldenburg 2001.

– 8.♗c4 0-0 9.♖e2 ♗bd7 10.♗d5 ♗xd2+ 11.♗xd2 b5 12.♗xf6+ ♗xf6 13.♗b3 ♗b7 Wanderley-Csom, Porto 2000.

– 8.♗d3 0-0 9.0-0 ♗g4 10.a3 ♗xc3 11.♗xc3 ♗c6 12.h3 ♗h5 13.♖e2 ♗e8 14.♗ad1 d5 was great for Black in Klein-Gligoric, Santa Fe 1960.

7...♖c7 8.♖d3

Or 8.♗b3 0-0 (see 8...d6 above) 9.0-0 ♗xc3 10.bxc3 Geller-Taimanov, Leningrad 1957, and now 10...d6 11.♗c1 ♗bd7 12.♗g5 h6 13.♗h4 b6 with equal play is an old analysis by Gligoric and V.Sokolov.

8...d6

We looked at 8...b5 in Sefc-O'Kelly above.

9.0-0



9...♗xc3! 10.♖xc3

This is tactically possible, but it loses a lot of time. After 10.bxc3 it is most accurate to re-

frain from ...b5 for the moment 10...♘bd7 (10...b5 11.♙b3 ♘bd7 12.♚d1 ♚c5 13.♙xd6 ♙xd6 14.♚xd6 ♚fxe4 15.♚c6 ♘d7 16.♘d5! Fedorchuk-Anapolsky, Alushta 2002) 11.♚d1 (or 11.♘a3 ♚c5 12.♘xc5 ♙xc5 13.♚ad1 ½-½ El Taher-Dutreeuw, Turin ol 2006) 11...♚c5 12.♙xd6 ♙xd6 13.♚xd6 ♚fxe4 14.♚d1 ♘c6 15.♘xe6 ♚xe6 16.♘xe5 ♚xc3 17.♚d3 ♚e2+ 18.♙f1 ♚xc1 19.♚xc1 ♚c8 and Black is marginally better. Soylyu-Mariotti, Budva Zonal 1981.

10...0-0

Not 10...♚xe4? 11.♘xf7+ ♙xf7 12.♙xc8+.

11.♙d3 b5 12.♙b3

12.♘d5 ♚xd5 13.♙xd5 ♘b7 14.♙d3 ♚d7 15.♘e3 ♚f6 16.♚d2 d5 also gave Black a very comfortable game in Meijers-Eingorn, Böblingen 1997.

12...♘b7 13.♚d2 ♘bd7 14.f3 ♚c5

Black has a super-Najdorf.

15.♙e2 ♚fe8 16.c4 ♚ac8 17.♚d1 bxc4 18.♚xc4 d5 19.exd5 ♘xd5 20.♘e3 e4 21.f4 ♚d3

With a huge edge in Quesada-Rossolimo, Havana 1952.

Variation II (3.♚c3)

In the first round of the 2002 semi-finals of the Dutch Championship (which are played according to the knock-out system) I was paired against IM Hoeksema. For my black game I decided to surprise him and played the O'Kelly Variation. After some thought he played 3.♚c3 which suited me fine: after 3...e6 4.d4 cxd4 5.♘xd4 ♙c7 the game had transferred into the so-called Kan Variation. The next weekend I had to play GM Nijboer. Even though he had a week to prepare for the O'Kelly I could not contain my curiosity and again went for 2...a6. He too played 3.♚c3 and play once again transposed into the Kan. How is this – a GM has a week to prepare for the O'Kelly and all he can think up is a transfer into a regular Sicilian? When I asked him

afterwards it turned out that it wasn't for want of trying. Nijboer claimed that he had almost 'refuted' the O'Kelly starting with 3.c3 but that he didn't like one particular line (below we will see which one) and then saw nothing better than 3.♚c3.

So on the one hand, 3.♚c3 is an admission of failure. Black can simply transfer the game into a Sicilian of his liking (usually by having avoided certain side-lines), for, apart from the Kan with 3...e6 4.d4 cxd4 5.♘xd4 ♙c7 or 5...b5 (when White has lost the options of 5.♘d3 and 5.c4), Black can also play 5...♚c6 (the Taimanov), and even 3...d6 4.d4 cxd4 5.♘xd4 ♚f6 (the Najdorf).

On the other hand, it seems that Black has to have some sort of regular Sicilian up his sleeve, for otherwise he can be embarrassed by 3.♚c3.

To my mind it is advisable to play the O'Kelly in combination with another Sicilian (preferably the Kan – see my recommendation for Black after 3.c4 in Variation IV). However, against 3.♚c3 there is one typical O'Kelly line that is worth investigating. It is the pet-line of GM Bojan Kurajica, and in a way all you need to do is to study his complete games with 3...b5 4.d4 e6 – and I can assure they are well-worth seeing.

□ Goran Trkulja

■ Bojan Kurajica

Neum 2004

1.e4 c5 2.♚f3 a6 3.♚c3 b5!?

The alternative move order is 3...e6 4.d4 b5.

4.d4

A young Karpov faced 4.a4 and was better after 4...b4 5.♚d5 (stronger is 5.♚e2 but in Apicella-Guidarelli, Besançon 2006, Black was fine after 5...♘b7 6.♚g3 e6 7.♘d3 ♚f6 8.e5 ♚d5 9.♘c4 ♙c7 10.0-0 d6 11.exd6 ♘xd6 12.♚e1 0-0) 5...♘b7 6.d3 ♘xd5!?

7.exd5 ♟f6 8.d4 ♟xd5 9.♙c4 ♟f6 10.dxc5 (10.d5) 10...e6 11.♙e3 ♚c7 12.♚d4 ♟c6 13.♚d3 ♟g4 14.♙xa6 ♟xe3 15.fxe3 ♙xc5 16.♙b5 0-0 17.0-0 d5 Vybormov-Karpov, Moscow 1968.

4.d3 ♙b7 5.g3 g6 6.♙g2 ♙g7 7.0-0 d6 8.a3 ♟d7 9.♙e3 e5 10.♟d5 ♟e7 11.c4 ♟xd5 12.cxd5 0-0 was a good effort by Kurajica. He went on to win in Gallagher-Kurajica, Istanbul Olympiad 2000.

4...e6

So this is what Kurajica's idea is all about. He doesn't take on d4, but decides to wait for a bit (should White lose his nerve and take on c5 himself then Black has a super-Kan). Strategically this is risky because of the looming d4-d5 advance. However, in the resulting closed (Benoni-like) positions Black has already achieved the ...b5 advance.

Note that 4...cxd4 5.♟xd4 e6 is the Kan again, while 4...b4 is risky, but it has been played occasionally by strong players.



5.d5

White gains space. In practice 5.♙e3 and 5.dxc5 are more popular, while 5.♙g5 has also been played.

Here is an overview:

- 5.♙e3 ♚c7 continuing his waiting-policy.



– 6.a3 ♙b7 7.♙d3 ♟f6 8.0-0 ♟g4 9.h3 ♟xe3 10.fxe3 ♟c6 11.a4 b4 12.♟e2 g6 13.d5 ♟e5 14.c4 ♙g7 favoured Black in Ljubicic-Kurajica, Split 2004.

– 6.a4 b4 7.♟b1 ♟f6 8.♟bd2 d5!? 9.e5 cxd4! 10.♙xd4 ♟fd7 11.b3 ♟c6 12.♙b2 ♙c5 13.♙d3 ♟cxe5 14.♟xe5 ♟xe5 Black is a healthy pawn up. Because the rest of the game is great I will give the remaining moves without comments: 15.♚e2 ♙d6 16.♙c1 0-0 17.g3 f6 18.f4 ♟xd3+ 19.cxd3 ♚b6 20.♟f3 e5! 21.fxe5 fxe5 22.♟xe5 ♙xe5 23.♙xe5 ♙g4! 24.♚d2 ♙f3 25.d4 ♚g6! 26.♚c2 ♙g5 27.♚d2 ♙e3+ 28.♟f2 ♙f8+ 29.♙f4 ♙xf4+ 30.gxf4 ♙xf4+ 31.♙g1 ♙g3+ 0-1 Mitkov-Kurajica, Skopje 2002.

– 6.dxc5 ♙xc5 7.♙d4 ♙xd4 8.♚xd4 f6 (this may look odd, but it is a normal move in the Taimanov type of position that follows. Let us enjoy this model game for a bit longer) 9.0-0-0 ♟c6 10.♚e3 ♟h6! 11.h3 ♟f7 12.g4 ♙b7 13.♙g1 ♙c8 Black is doing great already. 14.♙d2 g5! (fixing some important dark squares. With this in mind the following knight manoeuvres are easily understood) 15.♙e2 ♟ce5 16.♙gd1 ♚c5! 17.♟d4 ♟g6! 18.♙f1 ♟fe5 with a huge positional advantage in Rogic-Kurajica, Bled 1997.

- 5.dxc5 ♙xc5 6.♙d3 (this could be called a Kan Variation: viz. 3...e6 4.d4 cxd4 5.♟xd4 b5 6.♙d3 ♙c5!? 7.♟f3) 6...♙b7 7.0-0 (or 7.♚e2 ♟c6 8.♙e3 ♙xe3 9.♚xe3

♖c7 10.0-0 ♖ge7 11.♠ad1 0-0 12.e5 ♖g6 13.♠fe1 ♖ce7 14.♠e4 ♠ac8 15.a3 ♠xe4 16.♠xe4 ♖c6 with equal play. Camino Carrio-Kurajica, Santa Cruz de la Palma 2005) 7...♖c7 8.♠e2 ♖c6 9.♠e3 ♠e7!? 10.♖d4 ♖f6 11.f4 d6 12.♖h1 b4 13.♖d1 0-0 with a very satisfactory Scheveningen for Black. Zozulia-Baklan, Werther 2004.

● 5.♠g5 ♖c7 6.♖d2 ♠b7 7.♠f4 ♠a5 8.d5 b4 9.♖d1 ♖f6 10.dxe6 dxe6! 11.e5 ♖d5 12.♠d3 ♖d7 13.♠g3 ♖c7 14.b3 ♖5b6 15.♠e2 c4! 16.bxc4 ♠c8 17.♖b2 ♠c5 18.0-0 ♠xf3! 19.♠xf3 ♠d4 with a clear edge in Schöne-Gaponenko, Leutersdorf 2004.

5...♠b7



6.a4

This doesn't work out so well. Yet, it is not clear what does. Some practical examples:

– 6.♠g5 ♠e7 (6...♖c7) 7.♠xe7 ♖xe7 8.dxe6 fxe6 9.♖d6 b4 10.♖a4 ♠xe4 11.♖xc5 0-0 is fine for Black. Decoster-Motwani, Belgium tt 2006/07.

– 6.d6!? f6?! (6...b4 is the acid test) 7.e5 ♠xf3 8.gxf3! (8.♠xf3 ♖c6 and White's centre crumbles) 8...fxe5 9.f4! ♖c6 10.♠g2 b4 11.♖a4 (11.♠xc6) 11...♠f6 12.♠xc6! dxc6 13.♠f3 ♠d8 14.♖xc6+ ♖f7 15.♠b7+ ♖e8 16.♠c6+ (why not play on with 16.♖xc5?) 16...♖f7 17.♠b7+ ♖e8 18.♖c6+ ½-½ Stojanovski-Kurajica, Sarajevo 2006.

– 6.a3 ♖f6 7.♠g5 ♖c7 8.♖d2 d6 9.♠e2 ♖bd7 10.dxe6 fxe6 11.e5 dxe5 12.♠h4 ♠e7

13.♖g5 ♖b6 14.♖d3 0-0 15.♖xh7 c4 16.♖xf6+ ♠xf6 17.♖h3 ♠xh4 18.♖xh4 ♠f4 and Black had the initiative in Trkulja-Mohr, Sarajevo 1998. The real move order in this game was 5.a3 ♠b7 6.d5 ♖f6 and so on.

– 6.♠f4 b4 7.♖a4 ♖f6 8.dxe6 fxe6 9.e5 ♖d5 10.♠g5 Zelcic-Stevic, Bosnjaci 2003 (via 5.♠f4 ♠b7 6.d5). And now John Emms recommends 10...♖c7 in his chapter on the O'Kelly in *Dangerous Weapons*.

6...b4 7.♖e2 ♖f6 8.♠g5

White is not better in the ending after 8.dxe6 dxe6 9.♖xd8+ ♖xd8.

8...h6 9.♠xf6 ♖xf6 10.e5 ♖f5!



White has pushed his central pawns only to find out that he cannot keep them. Meanwhile he has also given up his dark-squared bishop. In short a positional catastrophe is looming.

11.♖g3 ♖f4 12.dxe6 dxe6 13.♖d2 The ending is bad, but how else to avoid the immediate loss of the e-pawn. 13...♖xd2+ 14.♖xd2 ♖d7 15.♖c4 ♠d5 16.f4 g5! 17.f5 h5! Clearly stronger than taking on c4. 18.fxe6 fxe6 19.♠d3 ♠xg2 20.♠g1 ♠d5 21.0-0-0 22.♖d6+ ♠xd6 23.♠xa6+ ♖b8 24.exd6 h4 25.♖f1 ♠hg8 26.♖e3 ♖f6 27.♖xd5 exd5 28.♠e2 ♠xd6 Black has a healthy pawn and more space in the ending. 29.h3 ♠e6 30.♠f3 ♠e5 31.♠de1

♠g8 32.♞xe5 ♞xe5 33.♚d2 ♚c7 34.c3 ♠f5 35.♚e2 b3 36.♠a1 ♠e5+ 37.♚d3 ♚b6 38.a5+ ♚a6 39.♠a3 ♚d7 40.♠g4 c4+ 41.♚d2 ♚c5 42.♠e2 ♚e4+ 43.♚d1 Now everything wins, but Kurajica opts for the prettiest and strongest solution: **43...♚xc3+! 44.bxc3 ♠xe2! 0-1**

So we have seen that neither 3.d4 nor 3.♚c3 can offer anything convincing against the O'Kelly. With 3.d4 White is playing into Black's hands since the resulting Open Sicilian positions are very comfortable for the second player. More subtle is 3.♚c3 to reach an Open Sicilian without allowing Black the kind of initiative he obtains after 3.d4. However, Black may either transpose into a respectable Sicilian (demonstrating that 3.♚c3 does not refute 2...a6) or adopt Kurajica's pet line. So it is clear that if a 'refutation' exists it would have to start with a move of White's c-pawn. Indeed, repertoire books have focussed on either 3.c3 or 3.c4.

Variation III

3.c3

White goes for an Alapin Sicilian where Black has committed himself to an early ...a6. Clearly this is an achievement for White. On the other hand, several strong grandmasters have reasoned that, since the Alapin is not the most critical approach, they do not run any risk either. The experts all seem to agree that Black can safely play 3...d5 4.exd5 ♞xd5 5.d4 ♚f6 6.♠e2 cxd4 7.exd4 e6 8.♚c3 and now 8...♞a5, 8...♞d6 or 8...♞d8. Dorfman, Eingorn and Csom are all happy to play in this way. Eingorn also likes our SOS solution 3...e6 4.d4 d5 5.e5 ♠d7 (see SOS-6), while Csom plays 3...♞a5 fairly frequently (see SOS-1 for a chapter on 1.e4 c5 2.c3 ♞a5). In this chapter I will concentrate 3...e6.

3...e6

This may transpose to a line in the French which was treated in SOS-6. Let me just briefly mention 3...d5 4.exd5 ♚f6!? (the sound alternative is 4...♞xd5 as I have mentioned above). The knight move is enterprising, but quite risky too. I first looked at this line in 2005 but never played it.

The point is that if White holds on to the pawn with 5.c4 then 5...e6 6.dxe6 ♠xe6 gives Black a lot of compensation. In the 2007 European Championship the game Naiditsch-Sowray went 7.♠e2 ♚c6 8.d3 ♠d6 9.♚c3 ♞c7 10.♠g5 0-0-0 11.♞b3 ♠he8 12.♚c4 ♠e5 13.0-0 ♚d4 14.♚xd4 ♠xd4 15.♠g3 h5 with great play for the pawn. Black later obtained a winning position, but then succumbed (given the FIDE tempo this probably happened in time-trouble).

More problematic is 5.d4 cxd4 6.♞a4+! (6.♞xd4 ♞xd5 is equal, 6.cxd4 ♚xd5 is fine too) when 6...♞d7 (6...♠d7?! 7.♞xd4 ♠g4 has been tried too) 7.♞xd7+ ♚bxd7 8.c4 is the crucial line. Khalifman feels that White is better, but Emms makes a case for it in his Dangerous Weapons chapter on the O'Kelly. **4.d4 d5 5.e5**

This is best. Less critical is 5.exd5 exd5! (5...♞xd5 is similar to 3...d5 4.exd5 ♞xd5) with a well-known theoretical position that is usually reached via the move order 1.e4 c5 2.c3 e6 3.d4 d5 4.exd5 exd5 5.♚f3 (5.♠e3 keeps more options) 5...a6.



A few examples:

– 6.♟f4 ♘c6 7.♞e2 ♘f6 (7...c4 8.♞bd2 ♞d6 9.♞xd6 ♞xd6 10.0-0 ♘ge7 Alienkina-Kasparov, Baku 1978) 8.0-0 ♞e7 9.dxc5 ♞xc5 10.♞bd2 0-0 11.♞b3 ♞b6 12.♞f4 ♘e4 13.f3 ♘d6 14.♞h1 ♞f6 Kasparov-Topalov, Geneva rapid 1996.

– 6.♞e3 c4 (6...cxd4 7.♞xd4 ♘f6 is playable too) 7.b3 cxb3 8.axb3 ♞d6 9.♞d3 ♘c6 10.♞bd2 ♘ge7 11.0-0 0-0 12.♞c2 h6 13.♞fe1 f5 with decent play in Demuth-Eingorn, Oberwart 1995.

– 6.♞d3 ♞d6 (or 6...c4 7.♞e2 ♞d6) 7.dxc5 ♞xc5 8.0-0 ♘e7 9.♞a4+ ♘bc6 10.♞h4 ♞f5 11.♞xf5 ♘xf5 12.♞g4 ♘ce7 13.♞bd2 0-0 14.♞b3 ♞a7 15.♞f4 ♞c8 was OK for Black in Groszpeter-Eingorn, Oberwart 1996.

– 6.♞e2 cxd4 (6...c4 7.♞f4 ♞d6 8.♞xd6 ♞xd6 9.b3 cxb3 10.axb3 ♘e7 11.0-0 0-0 Timoschenko-Kasparov, Tbilisi 1978; 6...♘f6 and 6...♘c6 are popular too) 7.♞xd4 ♞d6 8.♞d2 ♘f6 9.0-0 0-0 10.♞f3 h6 11.♞e3 ♘c6 12.h3 ♞e8 13.♞c2 ♘e4 14.♞fe1 ♞f6 was equal in Rotman-Eingorn, Metz 1996.

The other option on move 5 cannot unduly worry Black either: 5.dxc5 ♞xc5 6.exd5 exd5 7.♞e2 ♘f6 (7...♘c6 8.♞bd2 ♘ge7 9.0-0 0-0 10.♞b3 ♞b6 11.♞bd4 ♘f5 12.♞xf5 ♞xf5 was OK for Black in Gutierrez Olivares-Strikovic, Santa Cruz de la Palma 2005) 8.0-0 h6 (or 8...0-0 9.♞g5 ♞e8 Torrecillas Martinez-Psakhis, Andorra 2001) 9.♞bd2 0-0 10.♞b3 ♞d6 11.♞bd4 ♘c6 12.♞c2 ♞e8 13.♞d3 ♘e4 was comfortable for Black in Broekmeulen-Bosch, 's-Hertogenbosch 2003.

5...♞d7

In Variation II I mentioned that GM Nijboer thought he had almost 'refuted' the O'Kelly with 3.c3. This original French Advance was in fact the line that he made him decide to go for 3.♘c3 after all. In SOS-6 I have explored the whole Variation in Chapter 14. It makes

little sense to repeat that here. However, I will briefly mention the lines that are recommended in the topical repertoire books for White.

6.♞d3



6...cxd4 7.♞xd4

The other line is 7.cxd4 ♞b5, when Khalifman concentrates on 8.♞c2 ♞b4+ 9.♞d2 a5 10.♘c3 and now:

– 10...♞a6 from Aseev-Eingorn, Berlin 1997, should according to the former FIDE World Champion be met by 11.♘g5!?, while
– 10...♞xc3 11.bxc3 (11.♞xc3 see SOS-6) 11...h6 12.♘g1! ♘e7 13.♞e2 ♘d7 14.♞b1 ♞a6 15.♞f4 g6 was Andreev-Anapolsky, Alushta 2003, when the game continued 16.♞d3 as given in SOS-6. Khalifman recommends 16.♞d3 with a slight advantage instead. I agree that 11.♘g5 is quite dangerous for Black after 10...♞a6. After all, 10...♞xc3 11.bxc3 h6 is designed to prevent the knight-sally. So Black should make do with the strategically complex positions after 10...♞xc3.

The text is given an exclaim by John Shaw in *Experts vs. the Sicilian*. This seems a little exaggerated. Shaw gives 7...♘c6 8.♞xc6 ♞xc6 9.0-0 'and White's lead in development gives him attacking chances on the kingside.' In SOS-6 I mentioned that this occurred in two internet blitz games Karjakin-Baklan. While I also gave

7...♟e7

(which is not mentioned by Shaw) as stronger, to prepare ...♟bc6. See SOS-6 with reference to the game Schlosser-Braun, Altenkirchen 2005.

Variation IV**3.c4**

'The strongest reply of all', according to John Nunn in *Beating the Sicilian* (the first edition). The Doctor's stern verdict holds up to scrutiny only against the typical O'Kelly replies. If Black is happy to transpose into the Kan then there is nothing particularly strong about the text.

3...e6

The traditional O'Kelly reply has always been 3...♟c6 4.d4 cxd4 5.♟xd4 ♟f6 6.♟c3 e5 7.♟f5 d5 which looks nice but scores disastrously for Black (this is Nunn's main line too). Somewhat better is 5...e5 6.♟f5 d6 (6...d5 is again dubious) 7.♟c3 g6 8.♟e3 which is Emms' main line in *Dangerous Weapons*.

Personally, I wouldn't enjoy playing these somewhat inferior positions (though if you have a liking for the Kalashnikov then you may think otherwise). To Emms' credit I should add that he points out the dangers and notes the option of going for the Kan.

It would be great if Black could play the line 3...d6 4.d4 ♟g4!?



This works out fairly well for Black after 5.d5 e5!? for in the resulting Benoni Wall position Black has managed to pin the knight while ...a6 is useful too. Black will continue by taking on f3 and exchanging the dark-squared bishops. An example is Okkes-Bosch, Dutch tt 2003: 6.♟c3 ♟d7 7.♟e2 ♟xf3 8.♟xf3 g6 9.h4!? h5 10.♟e2 ♟h6 11.g3 ♟f8! 12.♟d3 ♟g7 with equal chances for both sides.

The main idea behind 4...♟g4 is 5.dxc5 ♟xf3 6.♟xf3 dxc5 when Black can make use of the hole on d4 to achieve a good game. For example:

– 7.♟e3 ♟c6 8.♟c3 e6 9.♟e2?! ♟d4 10.♟xd4 cxd4 11.♟d1 ♟b6 with a clear advantage. Butunoi-Ardeleanu, Arad 2006.

– 7.e5 ♟c6 8.e6 fxe6 9.♟d3 (9.♟h5+ g6 10.♟xc5 ♟d4 Postny-Golod, Ramat Aviv 2004) 9...♟f6 10.♟h3 ♟b4 11.♟e2 ♟d4 12.♟d1 ♟xd3 13.♟xd3 ♟xc4 14.♟d2 ♟g4+ and Black has gained a material edge Arakhamia-Kurajica, Malaga 2001.

– 7.♟b3?! ♟c6 8.♟xb7? ♟b4 9.♟a3 ♟b8 10.♟a7 ♟c8 11.♟e3 e6 0-1 Caminade-O.Foisor, Naujac 2002.

However, I must warn you that 5.dxc5 ♟xf3 6.gxf3! is at present considered to be very strong for White. The problem is that after both 6...dxc5 7.♟xd8+ ♟xd8 8.♟e3 and 6...♟a5+ 7.♟c3 ♟xc5 8.♟e3 White gains a lot of time which more than compensates his fractured pawn structure. I am not very optimistic about the chances that this line will be rehabilitated and so it makes sense (if you want to play the O'Kelly) to concentrate on 3...e6.

4.♟c3

This is more subtle than 4.d4 when Black can immediately transpose into the Kan with 4...cxd4 5.♟xd4 ♟f6 6.♟c3 ♟c7 or 6...♟b4.

4...♟c7

This is better than 4...♟c6 5.d4 cxd4 6.♟xd4 ♟b4 7.♟xc6! which is the line that Nunn

gave. Quite playable is 4...b6, when 5.d4 cxd4 6.♘xd4 ♗b7 leads to a hedgehog. In the recent game Strohäker-Jones, Dresden 2007, Black gave this an original twist though, with 7.♗e2 ♜c7 8.0-0 ♞f6 9.f3 ♗d6!? 10.♖h1 ♗f4 with interesting play.

5.d4

White can postpone d4 still longer. In Tomczak-Wojtaszek, Opole 2007, Black obtained an excellent position after 5.♗e2 b6 6.0-0 ♗b7 7.♞e1 d6 8.d4 cxd4 9.♘xd4 ♞f6 10.♗d3 ♞bd7 11.f4 g6 12.♜f3 h5!? 13.h3 ♗e7 14.♘b3 h4 15.♗e3 g5! 16.♘d2 gxf4 17.♜xf4 ♗e5.

5...cxd4 6.♘xd4 ♞f6 7.a3

This position is usually reached via the move order 1.e4 c5 2.♞f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 a6

5.c4 ♞f6 6.♞c3 ♜c7 7.a3. Black now has several conventional ways of continuing. In true SOS-style I would recommend 7...♞xe4!? which is the subject of Chapter 14 in this book!



CHAPTER 4

Glenn Flear

Really Accepting the QGA



1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e3 ♔e6!?

I'm going to be looking at play that arises after the moves

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e3 ♔e6!?

Apart from cheekily holding onto the c-pawn in an unconventional manner the move crosses White's attempts to steer the game towards the calmer lines of the QGA. Quite a few players opt for 3.e3 as Black has a number of tricky-SOS lines against 3.♟f3 e.g.

- 3...c6 which often arises via 2...c6 3.♟f3 dxc4;
- 3...♟d7 see SOS-3;
- 3...e6 4.e4 b5;
- 3...a6 4.e3 (or if 4.e4 then 4...b5) 4...♟g4 5..♟xc4 e6.

So imagine your opponent's surprise when you hit him with this one!

The inconvenience of this move, apart from blocking the e-pawn is that the bishop can be exposed to an attack on e6 with either ♟g5 or ♟f4, so Black has to be ready to react accordingly. The act of holding onto the c-pawn however is annoying for White as he either has to lose time to regain the pawn or indulge in tricky gambit-play which can be risky.

Despite the obvious surprise value these lines do occur fairly frequently in grandmaster games so they are given a certain respect by those in the know even amongst professionals.

The following eight games will illustrate the principle ideas for both sides. Here is how they are related to the variation, even though some of these games started with alternative move orders.

4.♟f3

If 4.♟a3 then 4...c5! Khermanov-Khamitskiy (Game 1).

Here 4.♟c3 c6 5.a4 ♟f6 6.♟f3 transposes to the main line. Note that 4.♟d2 is also met by 4...c5!. While 4.♟e2 f6?! is treated in Kozul-Varga (Game 2).

4...c6

This position was popularized a few years ago by Rausis via a Slav move-order (1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♟f3 dxc4 4.e3 ♟e6!).

Also possible is 4...♟f6 5.♟c3 c6 6.♟g5 ♟d7 Gelfand-Zilberman (Game 3), or 6...♟d5 Krush-Mikhailevski (Game 4).

5.a4

5.♟c3 b5 6.a4 b4 7.♟e4 ♟f6 Annageldyev-Vasilev (Game 5).

5...♟f6 6.♟c3

6.♟a3 c5 7.♟xc4 ♟c6 8.♟ce5 ♟d5 Teofilovic-Dizdarevic (Game 6).

6...g6 7.♟g5 ♟d5 8.e4 h6 9.exd5 hxg5



10.dxc6

10.♟xc4 David-Levin (Game 7).

10...♟xc6 11.d5

Vallejo Pons-Fontaine (Game 8).

Game 1

□ Alexander Khermanov

■ Sergey Khamitskiy

Petrovskaya Ladya 2007

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e3 ♟e6 4.♟a3

Aiming to restore material equality, but giving Black time and space to strike back at the centre.

After 4.♟d2 simplest is again 4...c5 which will probably transpose.

4...c5!

This vigorous response should soon bring Black equality.

5.♟f3 ♟f6 6.♟xc4

Equally lacking in bite is 6.♟xc4 e.g. 6...♟c6 7.♟e2 cxd4 8.exd4 g6 9.0-0 ♟g7 10.♟ce5 ♟d5 11.♟xc6 bxc6 12.♟f4 0-0 13.♟e5 ♟b6 with balanced chances, I.Botvinnik-Lev, Israeli tt 2002.

6...♟xc4 7.♟xc4 e6 8.0-0 ♟c6 9.♟e2

Otherwise 9.♟ce5 ♟xe5 10.♟xe5 a6 11.dxc5 ♟xd1 12.♟xd1 ♟xc5 was dead equal in Navarovszky-Gawlikowski, Warsaw 1961.

9...cxd4 10.♟d1 ♟e7 11.exd4

The exchange of the light-squared bishops leaves White with less attacking chances than in many typical IQP positions.

11...0-0 12.♟f4 ♟c8 13.♟e5 ♟b4 14.a3 ♟bd5 15.♟ac1 ½-½



Chances are more or less equal. Black has a solid defensive set-up but is a long way from being able to profit from his slightly superior structure. White's pieces are slightly more active and he therefore keeps the game in balance.

Conclusion: 4.♖a3 offers nothing.

Game 2

□ Zdenko Kozul

■ Zoltan Varga

Pula 2002

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e3 ♖e6 4.♖e2!?

Threatening ♖f4 hitting the bishop. A modest idea but one against which Black has yet to find a satisfactory solution.

4...f6?

An original concept very much in the SOS way of thinking, but although it worked in this game it's undoubtedly too weakening. More routine is 4...♗f6 but after 5.♖f4 the bishop has to move away from the pawn:

– 5...♗c8 (a concession which almost admits that he has lost his opening discussion as well as time and the centre) 6.♗xc4 e6 7.♗c3 ♖c6 8.0-0 ♗d6 9.♗d3 a6 10.a3 e5 11.dxe5 ♗xe5 12.♗xe5 ♗xe5 13.♗xd8+ ♗xd8 14.♗e2 favoured White in Dam-bacher-Levin, Belgium tt 2006/07.

– More natural would seem to be 5...♗f5, but after 6.♗c3 ♗bd7 7.♗xc4 e6 8.f3 ♗b6 9.♗b3 h6 10.e4 ♗h7 11.0-0 Ulibin-Turova, St.Petersburg 2003, White was well in control.

The Irish number one Baburin had a disaster following 4...♗d7?!, i.e. 5.♗ec3 b5 6.♗f3! ♗a6 7.♗xb5!! ♗f6 (7...♗xb5 8.♗xc4 ♗xc4 9.♗c6+ would be catastrophic for Black) 8.♗xc4 e6 9.♗b7 c6 10.♗xa6 cxb5 11.♗xb5 and Black had lost two pawns in Kiriakov-Baburin, Port Erin 2001.

How about 4...b5! which certainly emphasizes that Black is keen on holding onto the c-pawn! 5.♖f4 (after 5.♗ec3 c6 6.♗f3 ♗f6 White has nothing for the pawn as 7.♗xb5?? just loses to 7...♗d5) 5...♗f5 (or perhaps 5...♗c8 6.b3 e5!?) 6.♗c3 c6 7.e4 ♗c8 with murky complications. Black has lost time but at least he holds onto his extra pawn.

5.♖d2

After 5.♖f4 ♗f7 White lacks a coherent continuation as after 6.♖d2 Black gains time with 6...e5.

5...c5

White also keeps the initiative after 5...♗f7 6.♗c3 e5 7.♗xc4!

6.♖f4 ♗f7



7.d5?

The most awkward for Black is the simplifying 7.♗xc4! as the e6-square is then nothing less than a gaping hole in Black's position: 7...♗xc4 (7...♗c8 8.♗xf7+ ♗xf7 9.♗h5+; and 7...♗h6 8.♗xf7+ ♗xf7 9.e6 ♗d7 10.♗xc5 are dire) 8.♗xc4 cxd4 9.exd4 (9.♗h5+!? g6 10.♗xg6 hxg6 11.♗xh8 ♗d5 12.b3 ♗xg2 is less clear) 9...g6 (9...e5? is bad because of 10.♗h5+) 10.♗e6 ♗d7 11.d5 with an overwhelming positional advantage.

7...♗xd5!

It's important to eliminate this important pawn.

8.♟xd5 ♜xd5 9.e4 ♜d7 10.♙xc4

White has a clear lead in development for his pawn but Varga doesn't panic.

10...♙c6 11.♜h5+ g6 12.♜xc5

Material equality is re-established but Black can now activate.

12...♙d4 13.0-0 e6 14.♜a5 b5
15.♙b3 ♟e7 16.♙d1 ♟ec6 17.♜c3
♟g7 18.♙b3 0-0 19.♜h3 f5 20.exf5
exf5 21.♙e3 ♟h8 1/2-1/2

White has the bishop pair but the centralized, and well-supported, knight on d4 stops him doing anything much.

Conclusion: 4.♟e2 is awkward to meet. In reply I suggest the courageous 4...b5 as worth a try.

Game 3

□ Boris Gelfand

■ Yaacov Zilberman

Tel Aviv 1999

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e3 ♙e6 4.♟f3
♟f6 5.♟c3 c6 6.♟g5 ♜d7!?

Gelfand labels this as dubious. However, in a similar vein, Kasparov played 6...♜c8! in a blitz game against Korchnoi.

For 6...♙d5 see Game 4 (Krush-Mikhalevski, Schaumburg 2006).

7.e4 h6

The ambitious 7...b5 is provocative, whereas the calm 7...g6!? with the idea of just getting on with development is met by 8.e5 ♟d5 9.♟xe6 ♜xe6 10.♙xc4 ♟d7 11.♜b3 ♟b6 12.♟xd5 cxd5 13.♙b5+ and White is for preference.

8.♟xe6 ♜xe6 9.e5!

This is more testing than 9.f3 ♟bd7 10.a4 a5 11.♙e3 ♟b6 12.♙e2 ♟fd5 13.♜d2 ♟xe3 14.♜xe3 g6 15.0-0 ♟g7, Rodshtein-Lubczynski, Internet blitz 2006, after which Black stood well.



9...♟d5?!

Gelfand gives 9...♟bd7 10.♙e2 ♟d5 11.0-0 h5 (instead, 11...♙xc3?! 12.bxc3 ♟b6 looks suspicious after 13.♙g4 ♜d5 14.e6!) 12.♟e4 with compensation.

However, I prefer 9...♟fd7! 10.♙e2 ♟b6 11.0-0 ♜d7 12.♙e3 e6, when White has space, but Black is untangling and holds onto the pawn.

10.♙xc4 ♜d7 11.0-0 e6 12.♟e4 ♟b6 13.b3 ♟a6?!

A better chance is 13...c5, but even here White looks on top: 14.dxc5 ♟xc4 15.bxc4 ♜xd1 16.♙xd1 ♟d7 17.♙b1 for instance, although then Black can try and mix things with 17...b6!?

14.♙xa6 bxa6 15.♙e3 ♙e7 16.♜g4 g6 17.♜e2 White dominates the board as Black has weaknesses on both wings and nowhere to hide his king. 17...♜b7 18.♜d2 ♙d8 19.♙ac1 ♟d5 20.♙c4 g5 21.f4! gxf4 22.♙xf4 ♜d7 23.♙xh6! ♙h7 Here 23...♟b6 fails to 24.♜f4 ♙h7 25.♜g3.

24.♙g5 ♟f8 25.♙xe7+ ♜xe7 26.♜g5 ♙g7 27.♜h6 1-0

Conclusion: if Black wants to meet 4.♟f3 ♟f6 5.♟c3 c6 6.♟g5 with 6...♜d7!? he'll need to seek an improvement in the notes to this game. In particular see the note to Black's 9th move.

Game 4

□ Irena Krush
 ■ Victor Mikhalevski
 Schaumburg 2006

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♙f6 4.♘c3
 dxc4 5.e3 ♙e6 6.♙g5 ♙d5!? 7.e4 h6
 8.exd5 hxg5 9.dxc6 ♙xc6 10.d5

Less critical is 10.♙xg5 e.g. 10...♙xd4
 11.♙xd4 ♙xd4 12.0-0-0 ♙c6 13.♙xc4 e6
 with approximate equality in Tregubov-
 Kirov, Cetinje 1996.

10...♙e5 11.♙xg5



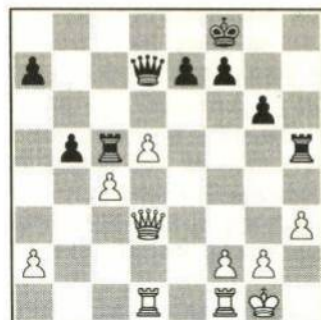
Instead, 11.♙d4 ♙fd7 (11...♙d6 12.♙xg5
 a6 transposes to the next note) 12.♙xg5 f6?!
 13.♙e3 g5 14.♙e2 ♙g7 15.f4 gxf4 16.♙xf4
 led to a white win in Akopian-Kirov, Palma
 de Mallorca 1989.

11...g6!?

A new move in this particular position. Pre-
 viously there had been a preference for
 11...a6, e.g. 12.♙d4 ♙d6 13.♙xc4 ♙xc4
 14.♙xc4 ♙xh2 15.♙xh2 ♙xh2 16.0-0-0
 ♙d6 17.♙f4 ♙d7 Gofshtein-Lalic, Neum
 2000, when a draw was agreed. White has
 the better development but he obviously did
 not see how to profit from it.

12.♙xc4 ♙xc4 13.♙a4+ ♙d7
 14.♙xc4 ♙c8 15.♙d3 ♙g7 16.0-0 ♙h5
 White is also probably a shade better after
 the alternative 16...0-0 17.♙ac1 ♙fd8.

17.♙xf6 ♙xf6 18.♙ad1 ♙f8 19.h3
 ♙xc3! 20.bxc3 ♙c5 21.c4 b5!



Breaking up White's centre.

22.d6!?

Black seems to be solid enough after
 22.cxb5 ♙hxd5 23.♙f3 ♙xb5.

22...bxc4?!

Passed pawns are not always a positive fea-
 ture if they are blockaded. Instead the safe
 22...♙xc4 23.dxe7+ ♙xe7 24.♙fel ♙f6 is
 equal.

23.dxe7+ ♙xe7 24.♙c3

White has less pawn islands and the safer
 king, so retains some chances of obtaining a
 lasting advantage.

24...♙e5 25.♙d4 ♙f6

White still keeps the better chances after
 25...♙h4 26.f4! ♙f6 27.♙c1.

26.♙c1 ♙h4 27.♙xh4 ♙xh4 28.g3!?

Another idea is 28.♙b1! ♙c8 29.♙b7, with
 pressure.

28...♙xh3 29.♙b4 ♙h5 30.♙xc4
 ♙d1+ 31.♙h2 ♙h5+ 32.♙h4!

Correctly avoiding the draw.

32...♙e5 33.♙b7 ♙d5 34.♙a8+ ♙e7
 35.♙xa7+

Winning a pawn. Now the next task is to
 get to the time control without letting slip
 the advantage.

35...♙d7 36.♙a8 ♙d8 37.♙a3+ ♙f6
 38.♙b3?! 38.♙h7 stops Black's king es-

caping to safety. **38...♟g7 39.a4 g5 40.♞b4??** A fortieth move that throws away the advantage. Necessary was **40.♞h5!** ♟g6 **41.♞h3** with ideas of ♟f3-h5+. **40...♞d2 41.♟g2?** Although **41.♟f3 ♟c5 42.♞b5 ♞xf2+ 43.♟g1 ♞xf3+ 44.♞xc5 ♞xg3+** would give Black every chance of winning, the text leads to a quick mate. **41...♟c5 42.♞b5 ♞xf2+ 43.♟h3 ♟f1+ 44.♟g4 ♞d4+** **0-1**

It's mate. A tragedy for White, but anything can happen in time trouble.

Conclusion: it seems that **6...♞d5!?** is playable, but White may be able to retain a pull. If we compare these positions with those arising in Game 8, there White has played a2-a4 and Black a developing move. So White has better chances in Game 4.

Game 5

□ Orazly Annageldyev

■ Milen Vasilev

Izmir 2006

1.♟f3 d5 2.d4 c6 3.c4 dxc4 4.e3 ♟e6 5.♟c3 b5 6.a4 b4 7.♟e4 ♟f6



White has to decide what to do with his knight.

8.♟c5

Grigorov-Vasilev, Bulgaria tt 2006, continued with **8.♟xf6+ exf6 9.♞d2 ♟d7 10.♞c1 c3 11.bxc3 b3 12.c4 b2 13.♞b1 ♞b8** with an unclear middlegame in prospect. Which is the most important: White's centre or Black's advanced pawn?

Otherwise **8.♞ed2 c3 9.bxc3 bxc3 10.♟c4 g6 11.♞e2 ♟g7 12.0-0 0-0 13.♟d3 c5** Boganov-Varga, Zalakaros 2002, was about equal.

In fact, **8.♟g3!** is perhaps White's most dangerous option:

– Black held out for a draw in Rusev-Danner, Gothenburg 2005, after **8...c5 9.♟g5 ♞d5 10.e4 h6 11.exd5 hxg5 12.dxc5 ♟xd5 13.♟xd5 ♟xd5 14.♟xc4 e6 15.♞b5+ ♟d7**, but he was always somewhat worse.

– The same was equally true of the following: **8...h6 9.♞d2 a5 10.♞c1 ♟bd7 11.♟xc4 ♟xc4 12.♞xc4 c5 13.dxc5 ♞c8 14.♟c2 e6 15.0-0 ♞xc5 16.e4 ♟e7** Arencibia-Perez, Santa Clara 2001.

– Critical is **8...♞d5 9.♟c2 e6!?** **10.♟xc4** (after **10.e4 b3 11.♟b1 ♞b4+ 12.♞d2 ♟a5** Black has interesting compensation for the piece) **10...♟bd7 11.e4 ♟xc4 12.♟xc4 c5 13.♞e3 cxd4 14.♟xd4 ♟e7 15.0-0 0-0 (15...a5!?) 16.a5** and White had an edge in P. Cramling-Govciyan, France tt 2006.

8...♞d5 9.♟c2

The most trustworthy move.

Black seized the initiative after **9.♞d2 e6 10.♟xb4 ♟bd7 11.♞e2 ♞b8 12.♞c3 ♟xc5 13.dxc5 ♟e4!?** in Krush-Ehlvest, New York 2006.

The other move, **9.♟e5?!**, has never really recovered from the following game: **9...e6 10.f3 ♟xc5 11.dxc5 ♟fd7 12.♟xd7 (12.♟d4 should be met by 12...0-0! 13.♟xc4 ♟a6!) 12...♟xd7 13.e4 ♟xe4 14.fxe4 ♟h4+ 15.♟e2 ♟e5 16.♟d2 ♟d3 17.♟e3 ♟e1+ 18.♟f3 ♟e5+ 19.♟f4 ♟h4+ 20.♟xe5 ♟f6+ 21.♟d6 e5+ 22.♟c7 ♟d8+ 23.♟xc6 ♟d7** mate



Izoria-Kupreichik, Istanbul 2003. No further comment is necessary!

9...e6 10.♗xc4 ♗xc5 11.dxc5



11...♗a5!?

Varying from a previous game of his opponent. However after 11...♗bd7 12.b3 ♗xc5 13.0-0 ♗e4 14.♗b2 0-0 15.♗d2 a5 16.♗fd1 ♗b6 17.♗e5 ♗fd8 Black had no particular worries in Annageldyev-Danielian, Alushta 2004.

12.♗xd5 cxd5 13.♗d4 0-0 14.♗d2 ♗a6

Is the c-pawn an asset or a weakness for White?

15.c6 e5! 16.♗b5

White later will regret this choice of square. More prudent would have been 16.♗f3.

16...♗e4 17.0-0 Instead, after 17.f3 ♗xd2 18.♗xd2 ♗b6 19.♗c1 ♗ac8 White

suffers due to the weakness of his e3-pawn. **17...♗ac5 18.♗fd1 a6** Suddenly the knight is trapped. **19.♗xb4** Making the most of a desperate situation. **19...♗xb4 20.♗c7 d4 21.exd4 exd4 22.♗xa8 ♗xa8 23.♗e2 ♗c8 24.♗ac1 d3 25.♗e3 d2 26.♗a1 ♗b3 27.♗a3 ♗ec5 28.h3 ♗c4 29.♗h2 ♗e6 30.♗g3 ♗xc6** 0-1 So the c-pawn proved to be a weakness after all. To be fair, this was due to the rest of White's position falling to pieces!

Conclusion: 8.♗g3 is the most testing in this line, see the notes to White's eighth move.

Game 6

□ Vjeran Teofilovic

■ Emir Dizdarevic

Blizovac 2005

1.♗f3 d5 2.d4 c6 3.c4 dxc4 4.e3 ♗e6 5.a4 ♗f6 6.♗a3



White shows his distaste for being a pawn down and decides to recuperate it immediately. This however gives Black sufficient time to hit back at White's centre.

6...c5! 7.♗xc4 ♗c6 8.♗ce5

White has all sorts of problems after 8.dxc5? ♗xd1+ 9.♗xd1 ♗e4.

8...♟d5

I consider 8...cxd4!? to be risky, e.g. 9.♟b5 dxe3 10.♟xd8+ ♚xd8 11.♟xe3 ♟d7 (the untested 11...♟d5!? 12.♟xa7 ♟d7 may offer a better chance of equalizing) 12.♟xd7 ♟xd7 13.♟c1 e6 14.♟xc6 bxc6 15.♟xc6 ♟b4+ 16.♟e2, Flear-Rausis, France tt 1998, when Black is only slightly worse after 16...a5.

9.♟xc6 bxc6!

The most dynamic recapture. Such broken pawns are nominally 'weaknesses' but Black's potential activity along the b-file outweighs any counter-activity that White is likely to generate.

10.♟e2 e6

Also reasonable is releasing the tension with 10...cxd4 11.♟xd4 e6, and although after 12.0-0 ♟e7 13.♟e5 (13.b4!?) 13...♟c7 14.♟c4 ♚d8 15.♟c3 0-0 16.f3 White went on to win in Touzane-Rausis, France tt 1999, at this point Black seemed to be doing well.

11.0-0 ♟b8 12.dxc5 ♟xc5 13.♟c2**13...♟e7**

Play was also about equal after 13...♟b4 14.♟d2 0-0 15.♟d3 e5 16.e4 ♟e6 17.♟c4 ♟d7 18.♟e3 ♟c7 in Czerwinski-Zubov, Warsaw rapid 2006.

14.♟d2 e5 15.b3 0-0 16.♟b2

White is catching up in development and could reasonably expect to obtain a balanced

game so Dizdarevic decides to gain space.

16...e4!

The type of pawn wedge that is typically associated with kingside attacking chances.

17.♟f1

Instead 17.♟xf6 gxf6 wouldn't be a particular inconvenience for Black who would have the bishop pair and plenty of dark squares. White's inactive pieces then couldn't effectively probe the damaged kingside pawns in the foreseeable future.

17...♟d7 18.♟c4 ♟b4 19.♟ab1 ♟e6 20.♟c3 ♟f8 21.♟a5

Finally getting some action against the isolated c-pawn.

21...♟xc3 22.♟xc3 ♟e5

Defending and pushing forward at the same time.

23.♟c4

Black now has a couple of ways of settling for half-a-point i.e. repeating (23...♟d7) or exchanging some pieces on c4 (23...♟xc4) etc. but being the highest ranked player and with time trouble approaching the grandmaster plays ambitiously...

23...♟d3!?

This knight can't be left to cause havoc from d3.

24.♟xd3 exd3 25.♟d2 ♟g6

The advanced pawn and Black's light-squared play give him some kingside pressure but breaking through isn't evident, and furthermore, if White can keep his defences intact then Black's queenside pawns, including the one on d3, may prove to be weak.

26.f3 h5 27.b4! h4 28.♟f2 ♟d6

29.♟g1 ♟h6 30.♟f2 a6 In order to slow down counterplay with b4-b5. **31.♟c5 ♟f6 32.♟c3 ♟d6 33.♟g1 ♟g6**

34.♟f2 ♟d6!? The best chance to break the deadlock. **35.♟c5** After 35.e4 ♟e6 36.♟c5 ♟bd8 play would be double-edged but White probably shouldn't be worse. **35...♟f6? 35...♟e8!** would keep things un-

clear. **36.b5?** A serious error. Strong is **36.e4!** with the tactical point that **36...Qxe4??** allows **37.Wxe5** forking and winning. **36...axb5 37.axb5 h3 38.g3 Qxf3!** A killer blow. **39.Qxf3 Wg4 40.Wxc6 Qxc6 41.bxc6 Qxb1 42.Qxb1 Wc4 43.Qb8+ Qh7 44.Qd4 d2 0-1**

Conclusion: **6.Qa3** yields no advantage.

Game 7

□ Vincent David
 ■ Felix Levin
 Rochefort 2004

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.Qf3 c6 4.e3 Qe6 5.a4 Qf6 6.Qc3 g6 7.Qg5 Qd5 8.e4 h6 9.exd5 hxg5 10.Qxc4

For **10.dxc6** see Game 8.

10...cxd5

Instead **10...Qxd5?** won't do because of White's dangerous threats following **11.Wb3**.

11.Qb5+ Qc6 12.Qxg5 Qg7



White hasn't shown any way to obtain an advantage from here.

13.a5

White failed to obtain enough compensation for his pawn after **13.h4!? a6 14.Qxc6+ bxc6**

15.Wf3?! Qb8 16.0-0 Qxb2 17.Qab1 Qxb1 18.Qxb1 0-0 19.Wd3 Wa5 Bacrot-Landa, Internet blitz 2004.

13...a6 14.Qxc6+ bxc6 15.We2 Wd6

Black has achieved a good game, he has the semi-open b- and h-files for his rooks and a central majority. These should be more significant factors than his weakened queenside pawn structure.

16.h3 Qd7 17.Wd2



17...0-0

After the interesting idea **17...We6+!** **18.Qf1** (**18.Qe2?! c5!** looks promising for Black) **18...Wd6**, Black loses two tempi to deny White the right to castle. Note that White's rook on h1 would then have problems to come into play.

18.0-0 e6 19.Qf4 e5

The only way to compete for the b8-h2 diagonal.

20.dxe5 Qxe5 21.Qa4 Qf8 22.Qd1

White's pieces are now fairly well coordinated and he has essentially equalized.

22...Qab8 23.Qxe5 Wxe5 24.Qh4!

Both a question of freeing a4 for the knight as well as seeking some tricks on the h-file.

24...Wg7 25.Qa4 Qb5 26.b4 Qe6

27.Qe1 Wf6 28.Qxe6 Wxe6 29.Wc3!

A nuisance for Black who has to make the following potentially weakening move.

29...f6 30.Wc2 Qg7 31.Wc1 g5

32.♖d4 ♜b8

Levin finally gets the time to bring this rook into play as there's nothing doing on the queenside.

33.h4?!

David should have also taken the opportunity to re-deploy his least effective piece with 33.♖b2 ♜h8 34.♖d3 when he would be ready for anything.

33...♞e8 34.♞d1?

Better is 34.hxg5 ♜e1+ 35.♞xe1 ♜xe1+ 36.♙h2 fxg5 with a playable ending.

34...gxh4!

Snatching a pawn as White cannot cause any serious damage.

35.♞f4 ♜h8 36.♞c7 ♙g6 37.♞a7

Black is also much better after 37.♖c5 ♖xc5 38.bxc5 ♜h5! 39.♞d6 (or 39.♞b7 h3!) 39...♞e5.

37...h3! 38.♞xa6 ♖e5 39.♞e2?

Although 39.♞f1 is a lesser evil White would still come under tremendous pressure after 39...♙f7!.

39...hxg2 40.f4 ♜h1+ 0-1

Conclusion: 10.♖xc4 causes no real worries for Black.

Game 8

□ Francisco Vallejo Pons

■ Robert Fontaine

France tt 2005

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♖f3 dxc4 4.e3 ♙e6 5.a4 ♖f6 6.♖c3 g6 7.♖g5 ♙d5 8.e4 h6 9.exd5 hxg5 10.dxc6

For 10.♖xc4 see Game 7.

10...♖xc6 11.d5 ♖a5

Black could also consider 11...♖e5 although the knight is less stable here e.g. 12.♖xg5 ♙g7 13.f4!? (the principled idea) 13...♖eg4 14.♖xf6?! (giving up the bishop rather

lightly. Correct is 14.♖xc4 ♜b6 15.♞e2 ♜h2 16.0-0-0 with a sharp but balanced position) 14...♖xf6 15.♖xc4 ♜b6 Rusev-Starostits, blitz 2004, with excellent compensation for Black e.g. 16.♞e2 ♜h2!.

12.♖xg5

A key position has arisen. Material is equal and White has the bishop pair, but in return Black has the open h-file, unfettered access to b3 and play against the isolated d-pawn. I quite like Black's chances.

12...♞d6

A good move but Black could also play 12...♖g7, for instance 13.♜b1 ♞d6 14.♞d2 ♞e5+ 15.♞e3 ♖g4 16.♞xe5 ♖xe5 Purt-seladze-Domany, Herceg Novi jr 2006 and Black is at least equal.

13.g3

Dydyshko was clearly unhappy with his game when he played 13.h4 and offered a draw, which was accepted in Dydyshko-Kupreichik, Minsk ch-BLR 2005.

13...♞e5+

Preferable is 13...♖h6! e.g. 14.♖xh6 ♜xh6 15.♖g2 ♜h5 16.0-0 0-0-0 and Black has the initiative.

14.♖e3 ♖h6 15.♞d4 ♜xd4 16.♖xd4

The queenless middlegame seems fairly balanced and Black could now even continue quietly with 16...♖g7, but Robert Fontaine decided on a sharper continuation.

16...♖d2+!?

**17.♙d1**

After 17.♙xd2 ♘b3+ 18.♙e3 ♘xa1 19.♙xf6 exf6 20.♙xc4 ♘c2+ 21.♙d2 ♘d4 the knight emerges and Black retains the material advantage of the exchange for a pawn. White would perhaps then have positional compensation but Vallejo decides that the best way to hope for an advantage is to keep the tension.

17...♙xc3 18.♙xc3 ♞h5

Otherwise, after 18...0-0-0 White continues with 19.♙c2 ♞xd5 20.♞e1 ♙d7 21.h4 and despite the pawn deficit he has good play with the bishop pair.

19.♙c2

Instead 19.♙xa5? is strongly met by 19...♞xd5+ 20.♙d2 ♘e4 regaining the piece with interest.

19...♞xd5 20.♞e1 ♙f8 21.♙g2 ♞f5 22.f4 ♘c6 23.♞d1 ♙g4?!

Offering a chance for White to invade on d7 will cost Black dear. Instead, not 23...♞c8?? 24.♙h3, but 23...a5!, e.g. 24.♞he1 ♘b4+ with a decent game.

24.♞he1 ♙f2 25.♞d7 ♙d3 26.♞e3 ♘c5 27.♞c7

This is stronger than 27.♙xc6 bxc6 28.♞dx7 ♘xa4 when Black should be able to hold.

27...♙xa4?

This just seems to lead to the loss of a pawn and a miserable rook ending. Instead, the last chance was 27...♘d8! 28.♞exe7 ♘ce6, when if White wants to try and win he'll have to sacrifice the exchange, e.g. 29.♞cd7 ♘c5 30.♞c7 ♘ce6 31.h4! (maintaining a kingside bind) 31...♘xc7 32.♞xc7 ♞b8 33.♞xc4 with admittedly excellent compensation, but White is still a long way from proving a decisive advantage.

28.♞xb7 ♘xc3 29.♙xc6 ♙d5 30.♙xd5 ♞xd5 31.♞exe7 ♞f5 32.♞xa7 ♞xa7 33.♞xa7

Against a lesser player Fontaine may have had drawing chances, but Vallejo gives him no chance.

33...g5 34.fxg5 ♞f2+ 35.♙c3 ♞xh2 36.♞b7 ♞g2 37.♙xc4 ♞xg3 38.♞b5 ♞g4+ 39.♙c3 ♙e7 Otherwise 39...♞g3+ just pushes White's king where it wants to go: 40.♙b4 ♞g4+ 41.♙a5. **40.b4 ♙d6 41.♞f5 ♙e6 42.♞c5 ♙d7 43.♙b3 f6 44.gxf6 ♞f4 45.♙a4 ♞xf6 46.♙a5 ♞f1 47.b5 ♞a1+ 48.♙b6 ♞a2 49.♞c1 ♞b2 50.♙a6 ♞a2+ 51.♙b7 ♞d2 52.b6 ♙d8 53.♙a7 ♞a2+ 54.♙b8 ♞d2 55.b7 ♞a2 56.♞d1+ ♙e7 57.♞d4** **1-0**

Conclusion: 10.dxc6 may even favour Black.

A final word: There are a few lines which are challenging for the second player (see Games 2-5), but no more than in many 'respectable' opening variations.

This SOS-idea in my opinion is both playable and actually quite tricky for White. For example, the main line as covered in Games 7 and 8 looks good for Black.

CHAPTER 5

Friso Nijboer

The Shirov Gambit versus the Philidor



Let's play 5.g4!

In my opinion, White is slightly better in the main line Philidor after 1.e4 d6 2.d4 ♘f6 3.♘c3 e5 4.♘f3 ♘bd7 5.♙c4 ♙e7 6.0-0 0-0 7.♞e1 c6 8.a4 a5. However, it is not so easy to make something of this small edge against a player experienced in defending this type of closed position. The same goes for the slightly better ending after 4.dxe5.

When Shirov played 5.g4 in 2003 against Azmaiparashvili the chess world looked on in amazement. The fact that Shirov repeated his line in several games demonstrates that this idea should to be taken seriously and is anything but a one-off novelty.

Black has three different methods of responding to 5.g4. When Black accepts the

pawn on offer with 5...♘xg4 then he must be prepared to walk through a veritable mine field of tactical traps. White's compensation derives from the fact that Black's king will find it hard to reach a safe haven.

Black needs to keep the position closed and must seek counterplay against White's powerful light-squared bishop. The crucial game in my opinion is Stevic-Sebenic, Nova Gorica 2007.

It is possible to neglect 5.g4 with the simple 5...g6. Black moves his knight to h5 after 6.g5 and then goes on to fianchetto his bishop. In my opinion, this reaction is a little too simple. White obtains a better ending as may be seen from Nijboer-Strikovic, Calvia 2006.

The third possibility is 5...h6. At first sight this appears ridiculous as 6.g5 hxg5 7.♖xg5 gives White an untouchable knight on g5 – the square f7 is extremely vulnerable. However, the correct response was played in a 1999 game between Vaisser and Bauer: Black must play 8...c6 threatening the annoying... ♖b6 to trade queens.

In conclusion, the whole 5.g4 line leads to lively play with chances for both sides. There is plenty of room for creativity and I am curious how the Shirov Gambit will develop.

□ Alexey Shirov

■ John Shaw

Gibraltar 2005

1.e4 d6 2.d4 ♟f6 3.♙c3 e5 4.♙f3
♟bd7 5.g4 ♟xg4 6.♙g1 ♟gf6 7.♙c4
h6 8.♙e3 c6 9.dxe5 dxe5 10.♙d3

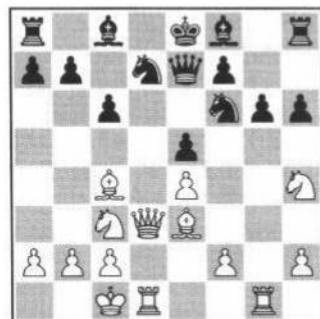


10...h5?!

A mistake after 5...♟xg4 is nearly almost fatal. Thus, one year later Shirov-Klinova, Gibraltar 2006, went: 10...♙c7? 11.♙xf7+ ♟xf7 12.♙c4+ ♟e7 (no better is 12...♟e8 13.♙e6+ ♟e7 14.♙xg7 ♙d6 15.♙f7+ ♟d8 16.♙d1 ♙f8 17.♙xd6 ♙xf7 18.♙xd7+ ♟xd7 19.♙xf7 and White is two pawns up) 13.♟h4 ♟b6 14.♟g6+ ♟e8 15.♙xb6 axb6 16.♟xh8

g5 17.♟g6 ♙c5 18.0-0-0 and Black resigned.

In the game Berg-Seeman, Kusadasi 2006, Black opted for 10...♙e7. After 11.0-0-0 g6 12.♟h4 White was ready to march with his f-pawn and eager to sacrifice somewhere.



– Seeman now played the timid 12...♙g8?!. After the forceful 13.f4 a6 14.♟f3 exf4 15.♙xf4 b5 16.e5 bxc4 17.♙xc4 White held a huge initiative. So Black went for the ending after 17...♙b4 (no good is 17...♙c5 18.♙e2 ♟h5 19.e6 ♟d6 20.exf7+ ♟xf7 21.♟e5+ ♟g7 22.♙e3 with a huge attack) 18.♙xb4 ♟xb4 19.exf6 ♙xc3 20.bxc3 ♟xf6 21.♙xh6 ♙e6 22.♟d4. Although Black may not be lost, it is hard to defend in practice and Berg won on move 30.

– The real question is how White should respond to 12...♟h5. The positional 13.♟g2 is possible to prepare f2-f4. The sacrifice 13.♙xf7+ ♙xf7 14.♟xg6 ♟f4 15.♙xf4 ♙g8 16.♙xe5 ♙xg6 17.♙xg6 ♙xg6 18.♙g3 ♟c5 is interesting, but at best unclear.

In my opinion, 10...b5 is the most principal reply. See the next game. Now we continue with Shaw's 10...♟h5?!

11.♙xf7+

Shirov immediately seeks to punish Black. The sacrifice may be good, but the resulting position is so complex that a mistake is easily made.

Meanwhile, White had the much more practical 11.0-0 at his disposal. It is important that Black's positional threat of 11...♞f6 fails tactically to the brutal 12.♖b5! cxb5 (after 12...♖f4 13.♙xf4 ♞xf4+ 14.♗b1 Black can no longer parry all the threats) 13.♙xb5 ♞e7 14.♖xe5 ♖f6 15.f4! a6 16.♙c5! ♞xc5 17.♖xd7 ♙xd7 18.♙xd7+ ♖d8 19.e5 and White's attack is too strong. 11...♗xf7 12.♖xe5+ ♖xe5 13.♞xd8 ♖f3+ 14.♗d1 ♖xg1 15.♗c1 ♖h3 16.f4 ♙c5 17.♞c7+ ♙e7 18.♙c5 ♙e8 19.f5 ♗f8 20.♙xe7+ ♙xe7 21.♞d8+ ♗f7 22.b3 ♖f6



23.♗b2?

White is still better after 23.♞d4 ♖g4 24.♗b2 ♖e5. The text allows a neat drawing motif.

23...♖g5 24.♙g1 ♙d7 25.♞h8 ♙e7 26.♞d8 ♙d7 27.♞h8 ♙e7 1/2-1/2

□ Hrvoje Stevic
 ■ Matej Sebenik
 Nova Gorica 2007

1.e4 d6 2.d4 ♖f6 3.♙c3 e5 4.♖f3 ♖bd7 5.g4 ♖xg4 6.♙g1 ♖gf6 7.♙c4 h6

It is dangerous to give up the centre with 7...exd4. White develops fast after 8.♞xd4, while 8.♖xd4 also gives him a big initiative.

8.♙e3 c6 9.dxe5

This is the correct moment to fix the pawn structure. Otherwise Black will obtain additional possibilities. An attempt to circumvent the game with 9.♞d3?! has a contrary effect after 9...b5 10.♙b3 a5 11.d5 a4 12.dxc6 axb3 13.cxd7+ ♞xd7 14.cxb3 b4 and Black is better.

9...dxe5 10.♞d3 b5 11.♙b3

Here 11.♙xf7+?! fails to 11...♗xf7 12.♖xe5+ ♖xe5! 13.♞xd8 ♖f3+ 14.♗d1 ♖xg1 15.♗c1 ♙e7 16.♞c7 (very bad is 16.♞xh8 ♙b7 17.♞xa8 ♙xa8 and Black has a won position) 16...♙g4! 17.♙c5 ♙he8 and his activity guarantees Black an edge.

11...a5



In my opinion this is the critical position of the whole 5.g4 complex.

12.a4 bxa4

If 12...b4? then 13.♞c4 ♞e7 14.♞xc6 ♙b8 15.♖b5 and White wins.

13.♙c4?!

White wants to keep his attacking bishop, but Black's response in the game is excellent.

The standard 13.♙xf7+? is bad due to 13...♗xf7 14.♞c4+ ♖e8 15.♖h4 (15.♞e6!?) 15...g5 16.♖g6 ♙g8 17.♞e6+ ♙e7 18.♖xe7 ♞xc7 19.♞xc6 ♙b8 and Black has nothing to fear.

In case of 13.♙xa4 ♙a6 14.♙c4 ♙xc4

15. ♖xc4 ♜c8 White has no good follow-up. Correct is 13. ♖xa4. From now on White will always have structural compensation due to Black's inferior pawn structure. Play might continue 13... ♗a6 14. ♗c4 (again taking on f7 is wrong: 14. ♗xf7+ ♜xf7 15. ♖b3+ ♜e8 16. ♖e6+ ♜e7 17. ♖xc6 ♜b4+) 14... ♗xc4 15. ♖xc4 g6 16. 0-0-0 ♜c7



I think that chances are equal in the diagrammed position. White has all sorts of possibilities to make something of his slight edge in development. Let's continue our analysis:

17. ♖c5 (adventurous players will like 17. ♖h4?! ♗e7 18. ♖xg6 fxg6 19. ♖xg6 with an unclear game) 17... ♗d8! (this is best. The naïve 17... ♗e7? fails to 18. ♖xd7 ♖xd7 19. ♖xd7 ♜xd7 20. ♖xe5 ♜e6 21. ♖xe6 fxe6 22. ♖xg6 and White wins) 18. ♖xd7 ♖xd7 (better than 18... ♖xd7? when White has 19. ♖xg6 fxg6 20. ♖e6+ ♗e7 21. ♖xg6+ ♜f8 22. ♖xh6+ ♖xh6 23. ♖xh6+ ♜f7 24. ♖h7+ ♜f8 25. ♖g1 and wins) and now for example 19. ♗d2 with equality:

– 19... ♗b4 20. ♖xb4 axb4 21. ♖xb4 c5 22. ♖xd7 ♖xd7 23. ♖b3.

– or 19... ♗g7 20. ♖c3 ♖xd1+ 21. ♖xd1 ♖d7 22. ♖a4 0-0 23. ♖xa5 ♖b7 24. ♖xe5 ♖xe5 25. ♖xe5 ♖xe5 26. ♖xe5 ♖a8.

So let us see what is wrong with Stevic's move in the game 13. ♗c4.



13...a3!

This move in connection with his next free the a5-square for Black's queen when Black can mobilize his pieces quickly.

14. bxa3 a4 15. ♖h4 ♖a5 16. ♗d2 ♗a6 17. ♖d5 cxd5 18. ♗xa5 ♗xc4 19. ♖h3 ♖xa5 20. ♖b1 ♖xe4 21. ♖b8+ ♖xb8 22. ♖c8+ ♜e7 23. ♖c7+ ♜e6 24. ♖xa5 ♗c5 25. ♖g4 ♖xf2+

With three minor pieces and three pawns for White's queen Black is completely winning. He won on move 47.

□ Koen Leenhouts

■ Marc Dutreuw

Belgium tt 2006/07

1. e4 d6 2. d4 ♖f6 3. ♖c3 e5 4. ♖f3 ♖bd7 5. g4 ♖xg4 6. ♖g1 exd4



7. ♖xd4

Here everybody always automatically takes back on d4. However, in my opinion 7. ♖g5 is a dangerous option:

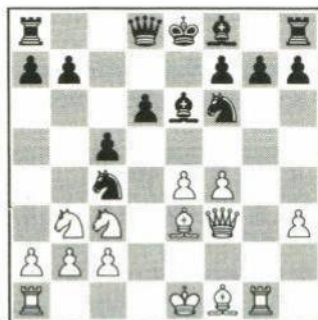
– in case of 7... ♖df6 8. ♗xd4, or 7... ♖gf6 8. ♗xd4, White develops fast and has dangerous attacking chances.

– 7... ♖e7?! is bad due to 8. ♖xe7 ♗xe7 9. ♖d5 ♗xe4+ 10. ♗e2 ♖e3! 11. ♖xc7+ ♖d8 12. ♖xa8 (easier to evaluate is 12. fxe3 ♖xc7 13. ♖xd4 ♗h4+ 14. ♖g3 ♖e5 15. ♗d2 with an attack for White) 12... ♖xc2+ 13. ♖d2 ♗xe2+ 14. ♖xe2 ♖xa1 15. ♖xd4 and in all likelihood White has a good position.

– 7... f6 8. ♖xd4 ♖xf2 9. ♗e2 ♖e5 10. ♖f4 ♖fg4 11. h3 g5 12. ♖g3 c6 (not 12... ♖h6 13. ♗h5+ with an edge in development for White and play on the light squares) 13. hxg4 ♗b6 14. 0-0-0 ♖xg4 15. ♗f2! ♖xd1 and now White wins after the spectacular 16. ♖d5! cxd5 17. ♗xf6 ♖c6 18. ♖b5 ♖e2 19. exd5 ♖xb5 20. dxc6.

7... ♖de5 8. h3 ♖f6 9. ♖e3 c5 10. ♖b3 ♖e6 11. f4 ♖c4 12. ♗f3

Entirely possible was 12. ♖xc4 ♖xc4 13. ♗f3 ♗b6 14. 0-0-0 0-0-0 15. ♖f2 followed by ♖h4 with a good game.

**12... ♗b6?!**

I see nothing against the greedy 12... ♖xb2!. After 13. ♖b5+ ♖d7 14. ♖c1 ♖c4 15. f5 ♖e5 16. ♗g3 ♖c4 17. ♖xc4 ♖xc4 18. ♖f4

White's compensation is negligible.

13. 0-0-0 0-0-0 14. ♖f2 g6 15. ♖a4?!

Correct was 15. ♖h4 ♖e7 16. ♖xc4 ♖xc4 17. ♖d2 ♗a6 18. e5 ♖g8 19. ♖de4 ♖xh4 20. ♗g4+.

15... ♖c6 16. ♖axc5 dxc5 17. ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 18. ♖c3 ♖e7 19. ♖xc4 ♖xc4 20. ♗xc4 ♖xe4 21. ♗c3 ♖e8 22. ♖xc5 ♗xf4+ 23. ♖e3 ♖c7 24. ♖f1 ♖c8 25. ♖d4 ♖d7 26. ♖xd7 ♗xc3 27. ♖xc3 ♖g5+ 28. ♖b1 ♖xd7 29. ♖xf7+

And the game ended in a draw on move 43.

□ Friso Nijboer

■ Aleksa Strikovic

Calvia 2006

1. e4 d6 2. d4 ♖f6 3. ♖c3 e5 4. ♖f3 ♖bd7 5. g4 g6 6. g5 ♖h5 7. ♖e3 ♖g7 8. ♗d2

**8... ♖c6**

After 8... 0-0 9. 0-0-0, the game Lastin-Azmaiparashvili, Tripoli Wch 2004, continued with the suicidal 9... f5?, after 10. exf5 ♖xf5 Lastin played 11. dxe5. Best would have been 11. ♖e2! ♗f8 12. ♖h4 ♖f4 13. ♖g2 exd4 14. ♖xf4 dxc3 15. ♗d5+ ♖h8 16. ♖xh5 ♖b6 17. ♗b3 gxf5 18. ♖xh5 and wins.

Interesting, but also incorrect, is 9... ♖b6?! 10. dxe5 ♖g4 11. ♖e2 ♖c4 (11... ♖xf3 is eas-

ier to refute: 12. xf3 c4 13. e2 xe3 14. xe3 xe5 15. e2! g7 16. g2 e6 17. f4 xf4 18. xf4 xg5 19. hf1 xf4 20. xf4 xg2 21. h4 and White wins) 12. xc4 xf3 13. exd6 cxd6 (after 13... xd6 14. xd6 cxd6 15. d5 White has lots of squares and the initiative) and with his control over square d5 and his active pieces White must be better.

I therefore conclude that 9...c6 is best to transpose into the main game.

9.0-0-0 0-0

9... a5 has no independent meaning – after 10. dxe5 Black must take back with the pawn: 10... dxe5 (10... xe5? fails to 11. xd6 xf3 12. d5) 11. h3 0-0.

10.dxe5

Inferior is 10. b1?! a5 11. d5 c5 12. b5 b6 13. a4 b8 14. e1 d8 15. e2 a6 16. a3 b5 and Black's attack is faster, Leon Hoyos-Hernandez, Mexico City 2006.



10...dxe5

Bad is 10... xe5? 11. xc5 xc5 12. e2 a5 13. f4 xc3 14. xc3 xc3 (White has a great attack after 14... xa2 15. c4 a4 16. b1) 15. bxc3 d5 16. exd5 e8 17. he1! (excellent, the invasion on the 8th rank guarantees a big edge) 17... xe3 18. hx5 xe1 (insufficient is 18... xc3 19. d3 c4 20. e8+ g7 21. e2) 19. xe1 d7 (in case of 19... gxh5 White has 20. e8+ g7

21. d6 and wins) 20. f3 and White has a superior position.

11.h3 c7

An important alternative is 11... a5 12. xd7 d8 13. a4! xd2+ (the point is that 13... xa4? fails to 14. xc6 xd2 15. xa4 ; possible is 13... a6 14. d3 xd3 15. xd3 xd7 16. a3! d8 17. h3! f8 18. c5 xc5 19. xc5 but White retains an edge) 14. xd2 xd7 15. c5 b6 16. xd7 xd7 17. c4 d8 18. xd7 xd7 19. d1 xd1+ 20. xd1 and White is better in the ending.

12.d6 xd6 13.xd6 b6 14.xc8



14...fxc8?!

More accurate is 14... axc8 15. b3 cd8 (the optimistic 15... f5 16. a4 fxe4 17. d2 f4 18. dxe4 is also better for White) 16. hhd1 (16. xd8 xd8 17. d1 transposes to the game) 16... xd6 17. xd6 f6 18. a4 fxg5 19. dxe5 f4 20. a5 and White has a large advantage.

15.b3 d8 16.xd8+?!

This is unnatural. Instead, 16. hhd1 xd6 17. xd6 f5 18. a4 f8 19. c5! would have given White a lovely position.

16...xd8 17.d1 xd1+ 18.dxd1 f6

No good is 18... f5? because of 19. exf5 gxf5 20. xb6 axb6 21. e3 .

19.h4?

After this loss of time Black is able to take over the initiative in the ending. White had to

continue with his plan by means of 19.♖b2 ♗h6 20.h4 h×g5 21.h×g5 f5 22.exf5 g×f5 23.♙xb6 axb6 24.♙c4 e4 25.♙h4 f4 and White still holds the better chances.

19...♗f7 20.♙b2 f5 21.♙xb6 axb6 22.♙c4 ♗e6 23.♙xb6 fxe4 24.♙d2 ♙f8 25.♙xe4 ♗f5 26.f3 ♗f4 27.♙d2

Black is also better after 27.♙d7 ♙a3+ 28.♙d1 ♗xf3 29.♙d2+ ♗g4 30.♙c4 ♙b4 31.♙cxe5+ ♗xh4 32.♙d3.

27...♙g3 28.♙d7 ♙e7 29.♙c4 ♙f5 30.♙a5 ♙xh4 31.♙xb7 ♙xf3 32.a4 e4 33.♙dc5 ♙d4?

Black had an easy win with 33...e3. In the game White won after mutual inaccuracies.

□ Anatoly Vaisser

■ Christian Bauer

Besançon ch-FRA 1999

1.e4 d6 2.d4 ♙f6 3.♙c3 ♙bd7 4.g4

Note the move order. Now Black has to defend with 4...h6. The game transposes to 1.e4 d6 2.d4 ♙f6 3.♙c3 e5 4.♙f3 ♙bd7 5.g4 h6. **4...h6 5.♙f3 e5 6.g5 h×g5 7.♙xg5 exd4 8.♙xd4**



8...c6!

This flexible move is best. In Nepomniachtchi-Hautot, Fügen 2006, 8...♙e5?! led to a clearly inferior game after 9.♙e2 ♙c7 10.f4 ♙fg4 11.h3 ♙h6 12.♙g1 ♙c6 13.♙d3

♙g8 14.♙e3 f6 15.♙f3 ♙f8 16.0-0-0.

9.♙f4

White has lots of possibilities here, but it is not so easy to determine which move is best. The text is logical: White controls square e5, thereby threatening 10.♙c4, attacking pawn d6 and developing a piece.

The alternatives are less good:

– 9.f4 ♙h7! (a standard move in the ...h6 variation; bad is 9...d5? 10.exd5 ♙c5 11.♙d3 0-0 12.♙d2 with an attack) 10.♙f3 (not 10.♙xh7? ♙h4+) 10...♙b6 with an unclear position.

– 9.♙c4? is bad because of 9...♙e5 10.♙e2.

9...♙g4 10.♙e2?!

A complex position. I believe that White obtains an edge if he succeeds in castling queenside without allowing the exchange of queens. That is why I would recommend 10.f3 and now 10...♙ge5 11.0-0-0 ♙b6 12.♙d2 ♙e7 13.♙e2 is perhaps not entirely clear, but I would prefer White.

10...♙b6



11.♙d1?

This is a mistake, but 11.♙xb6 ♙xb6 12.♙g1 ♙c5 13.0-0-0 f6 14.♙f3 g5 is also better for Black.

11...♙xd4 12.♙xd4 ♙de5 13.♙g3 f6 14.♙f3 ♙e6 15.0-0 g5 16.♙fd1 ♙xf3+ 17.♙xf3 ♙e5 18.♙e2 ♙e7 19.a4 a5

With a clear positional edge for Black, who won on move 54.

CHAPTER 6

Dorian Rogozenko

Early Surprise in a Classical Nimzo



Rubinstein Variation with 4...♘e4

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 ♙b4 4.e3 ♘e4

Black's last move is a rare guest in practice. On the Grandmaster level it has been played only occasionally. However, Black did score extremely well in those few games. Usually, books don't deal with 4...♘e4, with the notable exception of *Dangerous Weapons: The Nimzo-Indian* (Emms, Ward and Palliser; Everyman 2006).

Clearly, 4...♘e4 represents a quite unique occasion to surprise your opponent in a classical variation of the Nimzo-Indian as early as move 4! The idea behind 4...♘e4 is obvious: to put immediate pressure on White's position, disturbing for the moment White's

intention to develop quickly with 5.♗d3, followed by ♗ge2 or ♗f3.

5.♞g4

This is the best continuation for White. Other moves can hardly pretend to fight for an opening advantage:

- 5.♞g4 ♗xc3 6.♗d2 (or 6.a3 ♗e7 7.bxc3 0-0 8.♗d3 d6 9.♞h5 f5 equal) 6...0-0 7.bxc3 ♗e7 8.♗d3 d6 with equal chances.

- 5.♗e2 leaves Black with several playable possibilities. Here is a recent practical example: 5...d5 6.f3 (6.a3 ♗xc3 7.♗xc3 ♗xc3+ 8.bxc3 0-0 9.♗d3 b6 10.0-0 ♗a6=) 6...♗xc3 7.bxc3 (7.♗xc3 0-0 8.♗d3 dxc4 9.♗xc4 e5! pointing out the weaknesses created by the advance of the f-pawn. White

cannot take on e5 in view of the check on h4, at the same time attacking the bishop on c4) 7...♙e7 8.♘g3 h5!? 9.♙d3 h4 10.♘e2 c6 11.e4 dxe4 12.fxe4 e5 13.0-0 h3 14.g3 ♙g4 and Black converted his initiative into a full point, A.Smirnov-Miezis, Tallinn 2007.

– 5.♙d2 leads to positions where Black achieves everything he is dreaming of in the Nimzo-Indian: 5...♙xc3 6.♙xc3 ♘xc3 7.bxc3 d6 8.♙d3 c5 9.♘f3 ♘c6 10.♙c2 h6 11.0-0 0-0 12.♙fd1 ♙c7 and Black is already better. Laframboise-Lawson, Montreal 2003.

5...f5

For those players who like to create unbalanced positions right from the beginning and are not afraid of taking some risk, the variation 5...♙xc3 6.bxc3 ♙a5!? can represent an attractive option.



This was played in a recent game between two GMs, where Black nicely outplayed his strong opponent in strictly positional style: 7.♙a3 d6 8.♘f3 (after this move Black achieves a solid position and I would have little doubts to recommend this variation for Black if White would have been forced to play this way. In my opinion, White's chances are objectively preferable after 8.♙d3 ♘d7 9.♘c2 c5 10.0-0, when in contrast to the game White has better prospects to create a kingside initiative. However, the

position is complicated and may well suit creative players, who fear no ghosts and have a sharp eye for counterplay. Another try – 8.c5 – is hardly dangerous: 8...dxc5 9.♙xc5 ♘d7 10.♙a3 c5 11.♙d3 h6 12.♘e2 ♙c7 13.0-0 0-0 with a normal position for Black) 8...♘d7 9.♙d1 (this will soon turn out to be a waste of time. However, it does not make a substantial difference: Black already has a reasonable game anyway) 9...♙c7 10.♙d3 c5 11.0-0 ♙c7 12.♘d2 h6 13.f4 0-0 14.♙f3 b6



One may ask what the black bishop is doing on c7? A good question, but first one should answer a similar question about the bishop on a3. In fact ♙c7 has enough possibilities to enter the game later on, in any case much more so than the bishop on a3. The next part of the game shows how difficult for White it is to find a sensible plan or create any threats in such a position: 15.♙df1 ♙b7 16.♙h3 ♙ae8 17.♙c1 d5 (Black is well-prepared for the battle in the centre) 18.e4 dxe4 19.♘xe4 ♘f6 20.♘g5 (finally White brings the knight closer to the opponent's king. Unfortunately for him, there is no attack and the knight on g5 is only optically better placed than on d2) 20...♙d8 21.♙e3 ♙d7 22.♙h1 ♙fd8 23.♘f3 (bringing it back home. But then one may wonder about what the rook on h3 is doing?) 23...♘g4 24.♙c1 cxd4 25.♘xd4 ♘f6 26.♙e1

♠d6 27. ♖e2 ♜f8 28. ♜g3 ♜h8 29. ♜c2 ♜a3 30. ♜d2 ♜c5 Black has an obvious advantage and duly won. Alexandrov-V.Popov, Moscow 2006.

6. ♠d3

The most popular continuation. If White is trying to transpose the game into theoretical paths, then 6. ♠e2 is a good alternative. Nevertheless it must be mentioned that after 6. ♠e2 b6 we achieve a theoretical position, where Black has avoided several quite unpleasant variations. This position usually arises via the move order 4...b6 5. ♠e2 (5. ♠d3 – first alternative) 5...♠e4 6. ♖c2 (now 6. ♠d2 is another important option for White) 6...f5.



Presenting this line is not the purpose of this article. I will only mention that in my opinion with accurate play White can hope for only a slight edge after the precise 7. a3 (7. ♠f4 c5 8. ♠d3 cxd4 9. exd4 ♠xc3 10. bxc3 ♠d6 = Salov-Timman, Amsterdam 1996) 7...♠xc3+ 8. ♠xc3 ♠b7 9. b3! (9. d5 ♠xc3 10. ♖xc3 ♖e7 11. dxe6 – 11. b4 a5 = – 11...dxe6 12. b3 ♠d7 13. ♠b2 e5 14. 0-0-0 0-0-0 equal) 9...0-0 10. ♠b2, although the position certainly remains playable for Black.

Returning to the position after 5...f5 in the main line. If 6. f3 then 6...♖h4+ (deserving of attention is the more quiet 6...♠xc3 7. bxc3

♠e7 8. ♠d3 b6 9. ♠e2 0-0 10. e4 g6 11. 0-0 ♠c6 12. ♠h6 ♜f7 (unclear) 13. ♠c1 ♠g5 14. ♠xg5 ♖xg5 15. f4 ♖h6 16. e5 ♠e7 17. ♠b3 ♠b7 18. ♖f2 g5 with a slight edge for Black Estrada Degrandi-Kalkstein, Montevideo 1954) 7. g3 ♠xg3 8. ♖f2 f4 9. e4 (9. ♠e2 ♠f5 10. ♠xf4 0-0 =) 9...♖h5 (9...g5!? 10. hxg3 ♖xh1 11. gxf4 g4 12. ♠e3 ♜g8 unclear) 10. hxg3 ♖xh1 11. ♠xf4 (11. ♠h3 0-0 12. ♠xf4 is refuted by 12...e5 13. dxe5 d6 as mentioned by Emms in *Dangerous Weapons*) 11...0-0 12. 0-0-0 ♖h5 13. ♠xc7 d5 with very sharp and double-edged play.

Note that 6. ♠f3 b6 7. ♠d3 ♠b7 8. 0-0 ♠xc3 9. bxc3 0-0 leads to a theoretical position that is favourable for Black, see Variation I.



Now Black has a choice between 6...♠xc3+ (Variation I) and 6...0-0 (Variation II).

Variation I

- Alexey Mitenkov
 ■ Nukhim Rashkovsky
 Moscow 1995

1. d4 ♠f6 2. c4 e6 3. ♠c3 ♠b4 4. e3 ♠e4 5. ♖c2 f5 6. ♠d3 ♠xc3+ 7. bxc3 0-0

By playing this way Black is willing to transpose into a theoretical variation, which normally arises by the following move order:

4...b6 5.♔d3 ♘b7 6.♙f3 ♕e4 7.♖c2 f5 8.0-0 ♘xc3 9.bxc3 0-0. White's options to fight for an advantage here are connected with either 10.♔d2 or 10.♕e1, but in both cases Black has reasonable chances. Please note that 10.♙a3 is pointless. Black can answer this with 10...d6, 10...c5, or 10...♙f6. In all cases the bishop is committed too early to a3 and it is rather misplaced there.

An important point is that the mentioned variation is quite favourable for Black, since he has avoided the stronger 7.0-0 (instead of 7.♖c2). Therefore in the diagram position White's task is to avoid such a transposition.



8.♙f3

Here we have the first important possibility for White to avoid the mentioned theoretical variation with 8.♕e2, intending to play for a quick f3 and e4. Without practical games it makes no sense to start analyzing deeply at such an early stage. It is worth mentioning that if Black will succeed to create pressure against pawn c4, that would be quite efficient with a white knight on e2.

Some sample variations are: 8...b6 9.0-0 (9.♙xe4 fxe4 10.♖xe4 d5 with compensation; 9.♙a3!?), 9...♙b7 10.f3 ♔d6 11.♙a3 (11.e4 fxe4 12.fxe4 ♙xf1+ 13.♙xf1 ♖h4 unclear) 11...♔c6 12.e4 fxe4 13.fxe4 ♖g5 and White should be somewhat better, but the position is quite messy.

Note that 8.♙xe4 fxe4 9.♖xe4 d5 10.♖d3 ♖g5 offers Black typical counterplay thanks to the lead in development and a better control over the light squares.

8...b6



9.♙a3!?

This is White's second possibility to avoid the above-mentioned theoretical line (9.0-0 ♙b7 would transpose into it).

The third and last important alternative for White is to grab the pawn. After 9.♙xe4 fxe4 10.♖xe4 d5 (deserving of attention is 10...♔c6!? to which 11.d5 brings nothing special: 11...♖f6 12.0-0 ♕a5 with decent compensation) 11.cxd5 (11.♖c2!?) 11...exd5 White has the important resource 12.♖h4, offering the exchange of queens. The only available game Osnos-Bastrikov, Tashkent 1958, continued 12...♖xh4 13.♔xh4 ♙a6 14.g4!? ♔c6 15.♙g1



After 15...♗d3 16.♖g3 ♖a5 17.♕f3 ♘c4 18.♘e5 ♗xe5 19.dxe5 ♚fe8 20.f4 White succeeded to convert his minimal material advantage, although it must be mentioned that in the end Black misplayed a drawish position (most likely it happened in severe time-trouble).

However, instead of 15...♗d3 better looks 15...♗ae8 16.♖g3 ♖a5 17.♕f3 ♘c4, not allowing the knight to jump on e5. Black is active and has good control over important squares. It is very difficult for White to make use of his extra pawn.

9...♘d6

In case of 9...c5 10.♗xe4 fxe4 11.♖xe4 d5 12.♖c2 full compensation is quite questionable due to the fact that White has almost completed development and his bishop is actively involved in the fight for the centre.

10.0-0

The critical move is 10.e4. Then in order to avoid passivity Black should probably sacrifice the exchange: 10...fxe4 11.♗xe4 ♘xe4 12.♗xf8 ♗b7 (another possibility is 12...♗g5 13.♘g5 ♖xg5 14.♖e4 ♘c6 and now 15.♗a3 ♗a6 or 15.f4 ♖h4+ 16.g3 ♖h5 in both cases with compensation) 13.♗a3 ♘g5, and if 14.♘d2 ♗xg2 15.♖g1, then 15...♘f3+ 16.♘xf3 ♗xf3



With such a pawn structure and king in the centre it is not simple for White to take advantage of his extra exchange. For instance:

17.♖d2 (the attempt to create a quick attack is not successful: 17.♖g3 ♗h5 18.♘d2 ♖f6 and Black takes over the initiative) 17...♖f6 18.♖g5 ♖xg5 19.♖xg5 with good compensation in the endgame.

Of course all these variations are tricky and it might turn out that White is objectively better somewhere, but generally Black's position contains sufficient resources for counterplay.

10...♗b7 11.♘d2 ♖f6 12.f3

Black equalizes after 12.c5 bxc5 (12...♘f7 13.e4) 13.♗xc5 ♖g6 14.e4 fxe4 15.♘xe4 ♘xe4 16.♗xe4 ♗xe4 17.♖xe4 d5 18.♖f4 ♘d7.

Again 12.e4 is a move, although now it is less dangerous than on move ten. Black continues 12...fxe4 13.♘xe4 ♗xe4 14.♗xe4 ♘xe4 15.♖xe4 ♘c6, keeping plenty of possibilities for counterplay. If 16.d5 then 16...♗a5 with a complicated position.

12...♖h6 13.♖f2 ♘c6



Black has completed his development and can be optimistic about the future. He will combine a kingside attack with activity against White's weakened pawn structure on the opposite wing. The present game illustrates Black's potential in such positions very well.

14.♖e1 ♖h4 15.♘f1

White's plan is apparently logical, but now his pawn on c4 becomes vulnerable

and Black immediately uses this factor.

15...♗a5 16.c5 ♕f7 17.e4 f4 18.♖b4
♜c6 19.♙c4 d6!

Powerful play against doubled pawns. It may appear somewhat paradoxical, but in fact it is very typical: undoubling those pawns leaves White with other, even more annoying weaknesses.

20. ♖e2 For 20.cxd6 cxd6 followed by ... ♖c8 adds another plus to Black's position. **20... dxc5 21. dxc5 ♕g5** Black's attack is already decisive. **22. ♖c2?** A mistake in a difficult situation. **22... ♕e5 23. ♖b3** Or **23. ♖e2 ♕g6** winning. **23... ♕g6** Taking on f3 wins quicker: **23... ♕xf3+** and White loses a lot of material, since **24. gxf3 ♕h3+** **25. ♕g2 ♕g6+** **26. ♕g3 f×g3** is a complete disaster. **24. ♕h1 ♕d3** Winning a clean exchange. The rest is not difficult. **25. ♖ee2 ♕xf2+** **26. ♖xf2 ♖d8 27. ♖e2 ♕f7 28. cxb6 axb6 29. c4 c5 30. ♖c3 e5 31. ♖b2 ♖e7 32. h3 ♖ad6** 0-1

Varlation II

☐ Alexey Alexandrov

■ **Sarunas Sulskis**

New York open 1998

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♙b4 4.e3
♘e4 5.♙c2 15 6.♙d3 0-0



Refraining from exchanging on c3 has advantages and drawbacks. The good thing for Black is that White is deprived from any dcl-a3 ideas. Besides, winning the pawn by taking twice on e4 becomes even less attractive for White now, since the bishop pair will offer Black additional possibilities.

On the other hand the drawback of 6...0-0 compared to the previous game is quite obvious: White's pawn structure remains intact now. One can't have everything in chess...

7.  e2

A standard and logical continuation. White achieves a perfect development for his kingside pieces and avoids doubled pawns on the c-file.

● Dubious is 7.f3?! ♖h4+ 8.g3 ♜xg3 9.♗f2 f4 with an advantage for Black.

● After the greedy 7. ♖xe4 fxex4 8. ♗xe4 (more cautious is 8. ♖d2 when apart from different reasonable possibilities to sacrifice a pawn Black has the simple 8... ♖xc3 9. ♖xc3 d5 with equality) 8... d5



Black has good positional compensation owing to the weaknesses of the light squares in White's camp, his lead in development and the open f-file (notice that Black could include 8... $\text{\textcircled{x}}\text{c3}$ + 9. $\text{\textcircled{b}}\text{x}\text{c3}$ and only now advance the d-pawn, which would lead to Vari-

ation I. However, keeping the bishop offers a larger choice). Now exchanging pawns on d5 opens the position and looks too dangerous. Leaving the tension also works in Black's favour, who can use tactical factors due to his lead in development: 9. ♖d3 (9. ♜c2 e5!?, as suggested by Emms, opens the diagonal c8-h3 for the bishop and offers Black a dangerous initiative) 9...b6 (this is just one of several attractive options) 10.cxd5 (10. ♖e2 ♖a6 11.b3 ♖c6 followed by ...♖a5 is difficult for White) 10...♜g5! The most convincing. After 11.g3 exd5 White will regret the absence of his light-squared bishop. Black's initiative is obvious.

• 7. ♖f3 b6 8. ♖xe4 (8.0-0 ♖xc3 9.bxc3 ♖b7 leads to a favourable for Black theoretical position mentioned at the beginning of Variation I) 8...fxe4 9. ♜xe4 d5 (the exchange on c3 – 9...♖xc3+ 10.bxc3 d5 – is discussed in Variation I, see the comment on move 9 with 9. ♖xe4) 10. ♜c2 ♖a6. This position was never met in practice. Emms believes Black has enough compensation. Indeed, two bishops and a lead in development will most likely secure Black reasonable chances. Glenn Flear considers that Black is doing fine in case of 10...c5 11.a3 ♖xc3+ 12. ♜xc3 ♖b7. In my opinion, also not bad looks the simple 10...dxc4!?

7...b6



This is the first critical point of Variation II.

8.0-0

With the king's knight already developed grabbing the pawn is more justified than on the previous move, therefore 8. ♖xe4!? fxe4 9. ♜xe4 represents an important alternative to the game continuation. Black's compensation here is difficult to prove and the evaluation is rather a matter of taste. Active players will see enough potential in Black's position and enjoy the long-term slight initiative. Emms recommends 9...d5 (an attractive option is 9...♖c6!? 10.0-0 ♖b7) 10.cxd5 (10. ♜c2 dxc4 is fine for Black) 10...exd5 11. ♜c2 ♖a6 12.0-0 ♜d7 13.a3 ♖xc3 14.bxc3 ♖c6 with reasonable play on the light squares to compensate for the pawn.

8...♖xc3 9. ♖xe4?!

Alexandrov must have missed something in his calculations. Most likely he planned to continue later with 11.cxd5 (see my annotations below to White's 11th move). Instead, he should have simply recaptured on c3 with the knight. After 9. ♖xc3 ♖xc3 10. ♜xc3 ♖b7 11.b4 we reach the second critical moment of the variation 6...0-0:



There is little doubt that thanks to his bishop pair White is objectively slightly better. Nevertheless the position might be perfectly playable with black. He will soon have a

comfortable development of all pieces and from the practical point of view it is quite easy to handle such situations, since it is White who must prove something. Notice that Black keeps counterplay possibilities thanks to his space advantage on the kingside. A possible variation is 11...d6 12.♖b2 ♘d7 13.d5 (or 13.f3 ♖g5 14.♞a1 a5 15.b5 ♞f6) 13...♗e7 (13...e5 14.f4± Sulskis) 14.♞ad1 (after both 14.dxe6 ♘e5 or 14.e4 f4!? Black has counterplay) 14...a5 15.a3 axb4 16.axb4 ♘e5 (even here 16...b5!? deserves attention, but of course Black can also adopt a more quiet strategy with 16...♘f6 17.f3 ♗f7 and White is only marginally better) 17.♙e2 b5!? (this is an interesting attempt to clarify the situation in the centre) 18.dxe6 bxc4 19.♙xc4 ♞f6! (19...♘f3+ brings nothing yet in view of 20.♙h1) 20.♙e2 ♞xe6 with a double-edged position. On move 20 White can also play 20.♙d5. Play is equal after the long sample line 20...♙xd5 21.♞xd5 ♞g6!? 22.f4 ♗xe6 23.♞a5 ♞xa5 24.bxa5 ♗d5 25.e4 ♗xe4 26.♗b3+ ♘f8 27.♗b8+ ♘f7 28.♗xc7+ ♘f8.

9...fxe4 10.♙xc3

10.♗xe4? loses in view of 10...d5.

10...d5



As usual in such positions where White gives up his light-squared bishop Black has

good play. The only justification of 9.♙xe4 could be 11.cxd5 followed by 12.♗b3, but this does not work concretely.

11.b4

The apparently strong 11.cxd5 exd5 12.♗b3 runs into 12...♙a6! and it turns out that White will struggle in an inferior position: if the attacked rook moves away from f1, then simply 13...♙c4 follows, with advantage. Giving up the exchange represents only a try to escape: 13.♙xd5 (13.♗xd5+ ♗xd5 14.♙xd5 ♙xf1 15.♙xf1 – 15.♙xc7? ♙d3 16.♙xa8 ♙a6 loses – 15...♙a6±) 13...♙xf1 14.♙xf1 (14.♙xc7+ is worse due to 14...♞f7 15.♙xa8 ♗f6 16.♗c2 ♙d3 and the knight remains trapped on a8) 14...♞f7. Black is better.

11...♙c6

A provocative move. Simpler and stronger is the more natural 11...♙b7 12.♙b2 ♘d7, when Black's chances are at least equal. For instance: 13.b5 (13.cxd5 exd5 14.b5 – 14.♗b3 ♘f6 – 14...♞f7 15.a4 ♘f8 with good attacking prospects on the kingside: ♗g5, ♘g6 etc.) 13...dxc4!? 14.♙xe4 a6 15.a4 ♘f6 16.♙xf6+ ♗xf6 17.f3 (after 17.d5 ♗g5 White must search for a way to escape; 17.♗xc4? is bad: 17...♙xg2! 18.♙xg2 ♗f3+ 19.♙g1 ♞f6 20.♗xc7 ♞g6+ 21.♗g3 ♞xg3+ 22.hxg3 h5±) 17...axb5 18.axb5 ♞xa1 19.♙xa1 ♗g5 20.♗xc4 ♗xe3+ and a draw is the most likely outcome.

12.♗b3

Now 12.b5 ♙a5 is equal.

The right way to exploit the drawbacks of Black's previous move was 12.♙a3 and White has some initiative in a complicated position. However, this is not really important for us, since 11...♙c6 was not necessary.

12...♙a6! 13.♗a4

Or 13.b5 ♙a5 14.♗c2 ♙b7±.

13...♙xc4 14.♗xc6

Immediately losing is 14.♞d1? ♗f6.

14...♙xf1 15.♗xe6+?

This loses. In a difficult situation White had to play 15.♖xf1 ♜h4 16.♕d1 ♜xh2 (16...♜xf2+ 17.♕xf2 ♜f8 doesn't work now because of the defence 18.♜c2, after which in spite of Black's attack White remains with material up: 18...♜xh2 19.♖b2 ♜h1+ 20.♖e2 ♜xg2 21.♜f1 ♜f3+ 22.♖e1 ♜xe3+ 23.♜e2. Black has all his eight pawns versus White's three, but two pieces are two pieces. White should be able to regroup and win) 17.♜xe6+ ♖h8 18.♜h3 ♜d6 and Black is somewhat better.

15...♖h8 16.♖xf1 ♜h4

Now, however, Black is winning in all variations.

17.♕d1



17...♜xf2+!

As from e6 the queen won't be able to protect the king.

18.♕xf2

18.♖g1 ♜e2 19.♕d2 ♜e1+ 20.♕xe1 ♜xe1 mate.

18...♜f8 19.♖e2 ♜xf2+ 20.♖d1 ♜f1+ White is severely punished for weakening the light squares in the opening.

21.♖c2 ♜d3+ 22.♖b2 ♜f2+ 0-1

Now it is time to draw conclusions. 4...♕e4 will produce a shock effect even against strong players. It often leads to specific positions (just look at the diagrams) and in most cases they are quite different from the usual 4.e3 lines. Besides, 4...♕e4 has little theory and just a few concrete variations to learn – certainly not a thing to ignore in the Rubinstein Variation (4.e3), which is the most complicated and largest part of the Nimzo-Indian.

The bad news is that a well-prepared opponent with white should be able to emerge with some opening advantage after 4...♕e4. However, this is rather a relative drawback: after all playing with black is playing with black...

In our case one must basically decide what variation to play (I or II, or even 5...♕xc3 6.bxc3 ♖a5!? as mentioned in the introduction), depending on one's own view on the mentioned critical moments. This is a choice between different types of positions, so with 4...♕e4 everyone should be able to find something suitable to his style.

CHAPTER 7

Adrian Mikhalchishin

The Caro-Kann of Bukhuti Gurguenidze



1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 b5!?

Bukhuti Ivanovich Gurguenidze (born in 1933) was the first Georgian International Grandmaster and he won the Georgian championship thirteen times.

As a player he was characterized by a sharp and unusual style, referred to as 'Caucasian' and later 'Moldavian'. He, as well as his pupils, were very fond of knights and pathologically disdainful of bishops. Consequently, it was essential at any given opportunity to exchange your bishops for enemy knights. The Georgian players were so devoted to knights that their well-known study-composer Gia Nadareishvili even created the special knight theme, calling it 'the dance on horses with sabres'.

Gurguenidze was well-known as the trainer of Nana Alexandria, and as the Director of the Georgian Chess Palace named after Nona Gaprindashvili. However, Gurguenidze also became known for his original opening ideas, one of which was his flank Caro-Kann opening.

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 b5!?

This idea has sufficient logical foundation. Devoted SOS readers may be reminded of John van der Wiel's chapter on 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 a6 in SOS-6. Gurguenidze's 3...b5 is sharper though.

Now White has four different options.

4.a3

The most simple and natural move to stop

further development of Black's initiative on the queenside.

The other continuations are:

● 4.e5 and now:

– After 4...♟f5 comes the typical 5.g4! ♟d7 6.♟e3 h5 7.gxh5 ♟h6 8.♟e2 ♟g4 9.♟d2 e6 (maybe 9...♟xh5 10.e6!? fxe6 11.♟f4 ♟f7 is not that bad?) 10.♟g3 ♟d7 11.♟e2 ♟xe2 12.♟cxe2 c5 13.c3 cxd4 14.♟xd4 ♟c7 15.f4 with advantage, Tischbierek-Weiss, Aschach 2001.

– 4...h5?! is possible, but Black is crossing the danger line.

– Interesting is 4...b4 5.♟ce2 e6 followed by 6...♟a6.

– 4...e6



5.♟f3 (after 5.♟d3 b4 6.♟ce2 ♟a6 7.♟f3 ♟xd3 8.♟xd3 c5 9.0-0 ♟c6 10.♟f4 ♟b6 11.h4 c4! 12.♟d2 h5 Black has an agreeable position, Senff-Gorbatow, Lippstadt 1998; very modest is 5.a3 a5 6.♟ce2 ♟a6 7.♟f4 b4 8.♟xa6 ♟xa6 9.axb4 axb4 10.♟f3 ♟e7 11.h4 h5 12.♟g5 ♟xg5 13.hxg5 g6 14.♟e3 ♟e7 with equality, I.Zaitsev-Gurgengizze, Alma Ata 1968/69) 5...♟e7 (typical in this sort of positions. Also of interest was 5...b4 6.♟e2 ♟a6. The actual move in the game seems far too risky) 6.♟d3 b4 7.♟a4! ♟a6 8.♟c5 ♟b6! (that is the way to combat the c5 knight) 9.a3 ♟xd3 10.♟xd3 ♟c8 11.axb4 ♟xb4+ 12.♟d2 ♟b6 13.♟c3 ♟e7 14.0-0

0-0 15.♟g5 ♟xc5 16.dxc5 ♟c7 17.♟a4 ♟e7 18.h4 h6, and Black held the position, Pavasovic-Teske, Graz 2001.

● 4.exd5 b4



and now:

– Possible is 5.♟ce2.

– The alternative 5.♟a4 is worse: 5...cxd5 6.♟d3 (the sharper 6.a3!? bxa3 7.b3 e6 8.♟f3 ♟f6 9.♟d3 ♟d6 10.0-0 ♟e7 11.♟c5 0-0 12.♟xa3 ♟c6 13.♟b5 ♟d8! 14.b4 ♟e4! did not yield anything to White, Juracsik-Boguszlavskij, Hungary 2002/03) 6...e6 7.♟e3 ♟f6 8.♟e2 ♟d6 9.0-0 0-0 10.♟g3 ♟a6 with approximate equality.

– 5.♟e4 cxd5 (worse is 5...♟xd5 6.♟g3 ♟f6 7.♟f3 h5?! 8.♟e3 h4 9.♟e2 h3 10.♟f4 with advantage for White) 6.♟g3 (the aggressive 6.♟c5 e6 7.♟d3 ♟f6 8.♟f3 ♟e7 9.♟de5 0-0 10.♟d3 ♟e4 11.♟d2 f5 12.♟e2 ♟b6 13.♟df3 ♟d7 14.h4 ♟e8! does not yield any results, Berger-Schleicher, Hamburg 2000; neither does 6.♟g5 ♟f6 7.♟d3 h6 8.♟f3 ♟bd7 9.♟e5 e6 10.♟gf3 a5 11.0-0 ♟d6 12.♟e1 ♟a6 and Black solves the problem of his king's security by the exchange on d3) 6...♟f6 7.♟d3 e6 8.♟f3 ♟e7 9.♟e5 0-0 10.0-0 a5 11.♟h5 ♟a6 12.♟xa6 ♟xa6 13.♟f4 ♟c6 14.♟e2 ♟b6 and Black successfully equalized, Dubisch-Silman, Seattle 1985.

● 4.♟d3 b4 and now:

– 5.♖a4 dxe4 6.♙xe4 ♘f6 7.♙f3 ♙a6 8.♙e2 ♙b5 9.♙c5 ♘bd7 10.♘d3 e6 11.0-0 ♘d5 12.♙e1 ♙e7 gave Black excellent play, Kupreichik-Bellon, Wijk aan Zee II 1977.

– 5.♙ce2 dxe4 6.♙xe4 ♘f6 7.♙f3 e6 8.♘h3 ♙e7 9.0-0 0-0 10.♙e1 a5 11.a3 ♙b7 12.♘hf4 Lechtynsky-Plachetka, Havirov 1970, and here 12...♙b6 or 12...♙c7 gave chances of a successful struggle.

4...dxe4

Some might like to try the alternative 4...a6, which is, in substance, quite sound. 5.♘f3 (stronger was 5.♙g5!, thwarting the development of Black pieces) 5...♙g4 6.♙e2 ♘f6 7.h3 ♙xf3 8.♙xf3 e6 9.♙f4 ♙e7 10.0-0 0-0 and Black is quite OK, Stojanovic-Seckic, Jahorina 2001.

5.♙xe4

And here Black has two plans:



5...♘f6!

The idea was taken up by none other than the great David Bronstein.

The other option is 5...♙f5 6.♘d3!? (clearly weaker would be 6.♘g3?! ♙g6 7.♘f3 ♘d7 8.h4 h6 9.h5 ♙h7 10.♘d3 ♙xd3 11.♙xd3 e6, where a classical variation emerges, including b5 and a3, which definitely favours the black side) 6...♙xe4 (worth considering was simply 6...e6; the pawn sacrifice 6...♙xd4 7.♘f3 ♙d5 8.♙e2 hands White a powerful initiative) 7.♙xe4 ♘f6 8.♘d3 (Tal

is keen to sacrifice the pawn, but nevertheless the following line also deserved attention: 8.♙f3!? e6 9.♙e2 ♙d6 10.0-0 ♙c7 11.h3 ♘bd7 and then 12...♙d8)



8...e6 (or 8...♙xd4 9.♘f3 ♙d5 10.0-0 e6 11.♙e2 ♙e7 12.c4 with an initiative in return for the sacrificed pawn) 9.♘f3 ♙e7 10.♙e2 ♘bd7 11.0-0 0-0 12.♙e1



Tal-Gurgenidze, Alma Ata 1968/69. And here Black should perform the following set-up: 12...♙c7, followed by a7-a5, b5-b4, and at the first opportunity c6-c5.

6.♘xf6+

In answer to 6.♘g3, Black has 6...e5.

6...exf6

Too foolhardy is 6...gxf6?!, for in the 'normal' ...gxf6 Caro-Kann Black aims to castle queenside.



7.c3

The extremely sharp 7.a4 brings nothing after 7...b4 8.♗c4 ♕d6 9.♖e2+ ♖e7 10.♖xe7+ ♜xe7 11.♞e2 ♗e6 12.♗d3 ♞d7 13.0-0, as in the stem game Klovans-Gurgenidze, Soviet Championship, Alma Ata 1968/69, and here 13...♞b6 with the idea of ...♞d5 would equalize.

Another idea, 7.c4, is also fruitless: 7...♗d6! 8.♗e3 (8.cxb5 0-0 9.bxc6 ♞xc6 10.♗e3 f5! with compensation) 8...0-0 9.c5 ♗c7 10.d5? (better is 10.♗d3!?) 10...cxd5 11.♖d2 d4! 12.♗xd4 ♞c6 with excellent play, Cosulich-Soltis, Reggio Emilia 1970/71.

7...♗d6 8.♗d3 0-0 9.♖f3 ♗e6 10.♞e2 ♗d5 11.♖h3 g6 12.0-0 ♞d7 13.a4 bxa4!

Weaker is 13...a6 14.axb5 cxb5 15.♞f4 and White is better.

14.♞xa4

Worth trying could be 14.c4 ♗e6 15.♖f3 with sharp play.

14...♗e8 15.b4 ♞b6 16.♞a1 ♗e6 17.♖h4 ♗c4! 18.♗xc4 ♞xc4



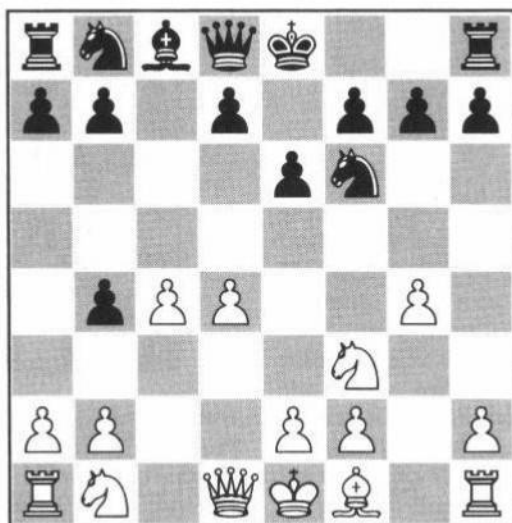
With comfortable play for Black in Shmits-Bronstein, Dnepropetrovsk 1970. The game ended in a draw after

19.♞g3 ♗f8 20.♗h6 ♗xh6 21.♖xh6 a5 22.bxa5 ♞xa5 23.♖f4 ♜g7 24.h4 h5 25.♞fc1 ♗e6 26.♞ab1 ♖e7 27.♞d1 ♞d5 28.♖f3 ♞d8 29.♖d3 ♗e5 30.♖d2 ♞c4 ½-½

CHAPTER 8

Jeroen Bosch

Bayonet Blow in the Bogo



6.g4 in the Vitolinsh Variation

The Vitolinsh Variation of the Bogo-Indian (starting with 4...c5) is a strategically original and highly surprising line. Black does not mind that after 5.♗xb4 he is forced to take away from the centre with 5...cxb4. From a conventional point of view he has compromised his structure and lessened his (pawn) control of the centre.

However, Vitolinsh and his followers (including many top-GMs) showed time and again that Black could follow a successful dark-square strategy with ...d6 and ...e5, as well as ...b6 and ...a5. In case of d4-d5, square c5 (freed by 5...cxb4) becomes available to a black knight. Moreover, the b4 pawn takes away the natural c3-square from White's

knight. This problem may be solved with a3, but then ...bxa3 frees the b4-square for a black knight too.

Clearly, 4...c5 could be the subject of an SOS, too, if it had not become such a main line in the years following Vitolinsh's first games with it in the 1970s. This Bogo-Indian became especially popular in the mid-1980s. Among the main developers of Vitolinsh's line were such strong grandmasters as Kortchnoi and Nikolic, but also (to a lesser extent) Timman, Seirawan and Salov – this list is by no means exhaustive, of course.

The variation is being played right into the 21st century, which demonstrates its viability. Among its current advocates are

Nisipeanu and Moiseenko. The most popular line after 5.♟xb4 cxb4 is 6.g3, but given the current popularity of g4 in many openings it probably won't surprise you unduly that we will advocate 6.g4! in the present article.

□ Yannick Pelletier

■ Oleg Romanishin

Istanbul Ech 2003

1.d4 ♟f6 2.c4 e6 3.♞f3 ♟b4+ 4.♞d2 c5

The move of the late Latvian genius Alvis Vitolinsh. White's best bet is to accept the challenge with

5.♟xb4 cxb4

And now we will look at the SOS move:

6.g4!?

In Kasparov's *Revolution in the 70s*, Adrian Mikhalechishin opines that the current g4 rage derives from the Karpov-Kasparov matches. When Kasparov encountered problems in the Keres Attack of the Sicilian (1.e4 c5 2.♞f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♞xd4 ♟f6 5.♞c3 d6 6.g4), he switched to the move order 2...♞c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♞xd4 e6 5.♞c3 d6, when he was surprised by (Igor Zaitsev's) 6.g4. Even without a knight on f6 this move turned out to be playable. Today the g4 advance may be found in the Meran (6.♞c2 ♞d6 7.g4 – Shabalov and Shirov), the English Opening (1.♞f3 ♟f6 2.c4 e6 3.♞c3 ♟f6 4.g4 – Zviagintsev), and the Philidor (1.e4 e5 2.♞f3 d6 3.d4 ♞bd7 4.♞c3 ♟f6 5.g4 – again Shirov). For the latter, see Nijboer's chapter on page 50 of this SOS volume.

The point of g4 in the present position is not an extended fianchetto (an aggressive version of 6.g3 so to speak). Indeed, in none of the games played with 6.g4 is the bishop developed to g2. No, its main idea is very close to

the Keres attack. With 6.g4 White is starting an attack on the kingside and preparing to chase away the f6 knight to gain central influence. Thus, White will typically follow this audacious advance with moves like ♞g1, g5, and h4 to strengthen his argument on the kingside; and ♞bd2, e3, and ♞d3 to increase his influence in the centre.

The position of both kings deserves a mention. Black lacks the time to develop his queenside pieces and to castle to that side of the board. Leaving his king in the centre disturbs his coordination too much (he needs to prepare e6-e5 at some point), so he is left no other option than to castle into the storm. White's king, on the other hand, will never go to the kingside. His majesty is either left on its original square, where things could become hairy should Black succeed in opening up the centre, or he will castle queenside.

6...0-0

Romanishin decides to castle into it. Naturally, taking on g4 is bad. After 6...♞xg4 7.♞g1 White will retrieve the pawn on g7 with a favourable position.

In the stem game of 6.g4 Black played the natural 6...d6. He was soon worse. White played 7.♞bd2 0-0 8.g5 ♞fd7 9.♞e4!? ♞e7 10.♞g1 e5?! 11.dxe5! dxe5 12.♞h3!? (12.♞d6) 12...♞d8



and now the powerful 13.♞d6 ♟f8 14.0-0-0

♟c6 15. ♖xe7+ ♜xe7 16. ♜d6 gave White a superior ending. The game continued: 16...g6 17. ♜d5 ♜b6 18. ♜xc8+ ♜xc8 19. ♜xc8 ♜xc8 20. ♜d2 ♜xc4 21. ♜c2, and White converted his material advantage in Legky-Spiridonov, Orange 1990.

Black's most interesting reply is the counter-blow 6...b5, which is aesthetically pleasing (mirror symmetry) too.



The high-level encounter Krasenkow-Moiseenko, Saint Vincent 2005, went: 7.cxb5 ♜b7 8. ♜bd2 0-0 9. ♜g1 a6 10. e3 axb5 11. ♜xb5, when Black had sacrificed a pawn to achieve free piece play. After 11...d6 12. g5 ♜d5 13. ♜d3 ♜d7 Krasenkow chose 14. ♜c4? (but it was stronger to play 14. ♜c2 g6 15. h4. And the preparatory 14. h4 with a subsequent ♜c2 or ♜b1 also deserves attention) 14...♜e7 15. h4. Black is now ready for 15...e5, which shows that the inclusion of 14. ♜c4 ♜e7 was not a good idea. Let's follow the game until the end: 16. ♜f5 ♜7b6 17. ♜xb6 ♜xb6 18. ♜g3 g6 19. ♜c2 ♜ac8 20. ♜b3 ♜c4 21. ♜e2 ♜a6 (Black now clearly has a lot of counterplay and White has good reason to worry) 22. ♜d2 (22. h5 ♜b7 is awkward too) 22...d5 23. ♜xc4 dxc4 24. ♜c4 exd4? (this loses the momentum. Very strong was the sacrifice 24...c3! 25. ♜xa6 cxb2 26. ♜d1 ♜c1 27. ♜d2 exd4, and White's position is probably beyond

saving) 25. ♜f6+ ♜h8 26. exd4 ♜xe2+ 27. ♜xe2 c3+ 28. ♜d1 cxb2 29. ♜b1 ♜fd8 30. d5 ♜c4 31. ♜xb2 ♜xd5 32. ♜e2 ♜c4+, and a draw was agreed.

Black may want to stop g5 with 6...h6. After 7. ♜g1 b6 8. e3 ♜b7 9. ♜bd2 ♜c6 10. ♜d3 d6



White's position nevertheless looks more pleasant to play. 11. ♜a4 (a serious and consistent alternative is 11. h4) 11...♜d7 12. ♜c4 (again 12. h4!? makes sense. The endgame after 12...♜e5 13. ♜xd7+ ♜exd7 favours White after 14. g5) 12...♜xe4 13. ♜xe4 ♜a5! 14. ♜xd7+ ♜xd7 15. ♜xb7 ♜xb7 16. ♜e2 Black is no worse in this ending. After 16...♜ac8 17. ♜gc1 ♜c7 18. a3 bxa3 19. ♜xa3 ♜a8 20. b4 a5! 21. bxa5 ♜xa5 22. ♜b3 ♜a2+ it is Black rather than White who has reasons to hope for more. His b-pawn may be isolated and backward, but he has an active rook on the second rank, and pawn c4 is weak and can easily be attacked once more by ...♜a5 (Bodiroga-Ilicic, Sombor 2004).

7. ♜g1

Played in the style of the Keres Attack. Pawn g4 is protected and the pawn storm is prepared. It is also useful to remove the rook from the h1-a8 diagonal.

7...d5

Reacting to White's flank attack by firmly establishing a hold in the centre.

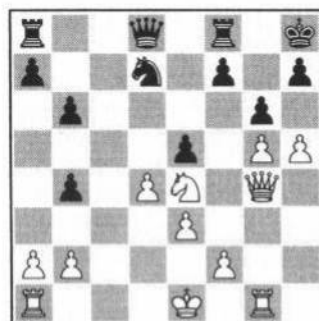


It is more 'Indian' to play 7...b6, when White should develop along the scheme outlined above: 8.♖b2 ♖b7 9.e3 ♘e4 10.♙d3 ♙xd2 11.♙xd2

Black has managed to exchange a piece (somewhat reducing White's fire power). However, White's remaining pieces are all good and he has fair chances of a successful attack. With his king still on e1, the position remains double-edged, of course. Black should initiate counterplay in the centre as soon as possible. 11...d5 12.g5 (further advancing the pawn and giving the queen access to the kingside) 12...♙d7 13.♙g4 g6!? (as 13...e5 is unpleasantly met by 14.♙f5) 14.h4 e5 15.cxd5 ♙xd5 16.♙e4, exchanging the powerful bishop. After the weakening ...g6 White's bishop has fulfilled its task. The knight should gain access to e4, underlining the weakness of square f6.



● Let's analyse the natural 16...♙xe4 17.♙xd4, and now, because of the threat of 18.♙d7, Black must lose a tempo with his king. After, say, 17...♙h8 (17...f5? 18.gxf6 ♙xf6 19.♙e6+ and 20.♙xe5), White must act quickly with 18.h5! (for the alternatives promise nothing: 18.0-0 is met by 18...f5 19.gxf6 ♙xf6 20.♙xf6 ♙xf6, or 20.♙g2 ♙c8+ 21.♙b1 ♙f5; while 18.♙d1 f5 19.gxf6 ♙xf6 is also OK for Black).



Now the lines fork:

– White has a powerful initiative after 18...f5, which is a forcing line: 19.gxf6 ♙xf6 20.♙xf6 ♙xf6



21.hxg6! ♙xf2+ 22.♙d1 ♙f3+ (22...hxg6 23.♙xg6 ♙f3+ 24.♙d2 ♙f2+ 25.♙d3 ♙f5+ 26.♙xf5 ♙xf5 27.♙e4, and White

wins) 23. ♖xf3 ♜xf3 24. ♔e2, and White is better in the rook ending.

– 18... ♜c8 19. hxc6 fxc6 20. ♜d1, and White's structural advantages are beginning to count.

– 18... exd4 at least destroys White's superior structure: 19. ♖d6! dxe3 20. ♖d4+ f6 (not 20... ♖g8 21. h6 f6 22. ♖d5+ ♖h8 23. ♖f7+ –) 21. fxe3 ♖e5 (21... gxf5 22. g6 hxc6 23. ♜xg6 ♖e5 24. ♜h6+ ♖g7 25. ♖f5+ ♖g8 26. ♖e4, with a winning attack) 22. ♜f1 ♖c6 (22... gxf5!?) 23. ♖d5 ♖e7! 24. e4! ♜ad8 25. 0-0-0, and White wins material.

● Instead, the game Handke-Fluvia Poyatos, Barcelona 2004, went: 16... h5? 17. ♖g3? (it is much more natural to open the position with 17. gxf6! ♖f6 18. ♖f3 exd4 – 18... ♖xe4 19. ♖xe4 f5? 20. ♖g3 wins – 19. ♖xd5 ♖xd5 20. e4, followed by 21. h5, is very strong) 17... ♖xe4 18. ♖xe4 exd4?! (18... ♖c8 would have prevented White from castling) 19. 0-0-0 ♜c8+ 20. ♖b1 ♖c7? (the resulting endgame is very difficult for Black) 21. ♖xc7 ♜xc7 22. ♜xd4 ♖e5 23. ♜gd1 ♜fc8 24. ♖d6 ♖f3? (24... ♜d8) 25. ♖xc8 ♖xd4 26. ♜xd4 ♜xc8 27. ♜xb4, and White was a sound pawn up in the rook ending.

8.e3 ♖c6 9. ♖bd2



9...a5

Romanishin starts an offensive on the

queenside. Although the plan of a5-a4-a3 gains space and dark squares, it is rather slow. Moreover, White's play on the kingside is much more dangerous. Practice has seen 9... ♖e4, which exchanges a piece. After 10. ♖d3 (10. ♖xe4 dxe4 11. ♖d2 f5 is OK for Black) 10... ♖xd2 11. ♖xd2 (11. ♖xd2) 11... dxc4 (11... e5) 12. ♖xc4 (12. ♖xc4) 12... ♖a5 White was hardly better, Ivekovic-Franciskovic, Sibenik 2006.

10.g5

Even stronger than 10. ♖d3.

10... ♖e8

Romanishin does not play 10... ♖e4, because after 11. ♖xe4 dxe4 12. ♖d2 Black cannot play 12... f5, since White can take en passant. White is also better after 10... ♖d7.

11. ♖d3 a4



12. ♖e5

Pelletier wants to score quickly. Black's reply is forced and after

12... ♖xe5 13. dxe5

White has a distinct space advantage on the kingside. This enables his pieces to operate actively. But it was also possible to take a quieter approach on move 12.

13...g6

14. ♖h5 g6 15. ♖h6, followed by ♜g1-g3(4)-h3(4), was a threat. Black is preparing some sort of 'last stand' with ... ♖g7.

14. ♖g4 ♖g7 15. c5

Suddenly changing his plans by making pawn b4 his target.

15...♖a5 16.♗d4 ♕d7



17.♖g4!

Now the rook comes into play via the fourth rank as well. Pelletier's imaginative use of his major pieces along a rank (rather than along a file) is reminiscent of some of Karpov's games.

17...♜fc8 18.♗xb4

Here 18.♜c1 is met by 18...b6.

18...♗c7

Now 18...♗xc5 19.♗xc5 (19.♗xb7 is double-edged) 19...♜xc5 20.♜b4 is rather similar to the game. Less accurate is 18...♜xc5?! 19.♗xa5 ♜cxa5 (19...♜axa5? 20.b4 axb3 21.♕xb3+-) 20.♜c1.

18...♗a7, with the point of 19.♜c1 b6, is perhaps best met by 19.♗b6.

19.♕f3

Or 19.♗b6 ♗xc5.

19...♗xc5 20.♗xc5 ♜xc5 21.♜b4

White has a pleasant positional advantage, although will not be all that easy to breach the fortress.

21...b5 22.♕d2 ♕e8 23.h4 ♕c7

The knight manoeuvre is played with a very concrete idea in mind.

24.h5

With the prophylactic 24.♜f4! White could have kept his advantage.



24...♜c4!

Not really a sacrifice, since Black can retrieve the exchange with ...♕a6 or ...♕d5 whenever he wishes.

25.♜xc4

Admitting his mistake. In case of 25.♕xc4 dxc4 26.hxg6 hxg6 27.♕d4 ♕d5 Black need not take back the exchange at the first opportunity. For example: 28.♕c2 ♕g7 29.a3 ♜h8.

25...bxc4 26.♕c2 ♜b8

Now Black is fine, so the players agreed a draw.

CHAPTER 9

Arthur Kogan

Inspiration versus the Dragon



Play like Tal

It all started with my preparation for a league game against Dragon expert Boris Alterman. My previous game against him was a painful memory – I lost without a fight, and was therefore out for revenge. However, Alterman's repertoire was not an easy nut to crack. He played both the Dragon and the Accelerated Dragon – and what is worse: he played them well!

At the time I hardly ever used a computer, in fact I even didn't have one, so I had to make do with my daily fitness training and a creative brain! Yes, I became a GM without the assistance of a computer. Something I am not so proud of these days, since maybe if I had had one...

I just used some Informators and books in the old style and trusted my memory even more than today.

So considering all this, and the fact that Boris was really a theoretical guy who successfully employed his well-studied lines, I really wanted to surprise him. For many years already, I had employed rare lines versus the Dragon. However, not one of them would be suitable to really surprise Boris.

Then I decided to use another simple strategy: I was going to invent a line with a harmonious piece set-up and with good central control aiming to play for a small edge. So, no long and forced lines (the usual aim of any Dragon player). Next, if he was going to

complicate matters, my better centre and pieces would punish him! This was my 'simple plan' that I thought should work well against such an aggressive and ambitious player as Boris. Still, this is easier said than done, and I couldn't sleep that night until I suddenly got an idea! And guess what? It worked even better than I thought!

□ Arthur Kogan
■ Boris Alterman

Israel tt 1999

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6

I was more worried about the Accelerated Dragon, but my idea was to play 2...♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 g6 5.♘c3 ♗g7 and now 6.♘f3! See the next game for this move order. I didn't sleep the previous night before I had figured out how to develop my pieces! The main idea is to avoid the sharp Dragon lines, without worrying about the usual tactics versus the d4-knight. The scheme that I wanted to follow was: ♗c4, 0-0, ♖e1, ♗g5, ♗d2 or ♗e2 and ♖ad1. Then, with all my pieces nicely positioned I can consider such actions as ♘d5 or ♗h6. I guess I didn't worry too much about 6...♗xc3+, since I still have to meet the Dragon player who is ready to give up his dark-squared bishop for only the doubling of pawns – leaving his king without its main defender in the process. Objectively, 6...♗xc3+ 7.bxc3 ♘f6 8.♗d3 is not so clear though.

3.♘c3

A tricky move order that works well in this game. After 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 g6 6.♗c4 (6.♘f3) 6...♗g7 7.h3 (see my comments below) 0-0 8.♘f3 Black is not obliged to play 8...♘c6 (which would transpose to the main game) but he can also play 8...♗bd7 as in Benjamin-Gufeld, New York 1989.

3...♘c6 4.d4 cxd4 5.♘xd4 g6 6.♗c4 ♗g7



7.♘f3!

Why not play it here as well? Later I found that I was not the first guy to play like this (as usual!), but surely I must be the first GM to recommend it!

7...♘f6

No good is 7...♗a5 8.♗d2 (8.0-0 ♗xc3 9.bxc3 ♗xc3+ is too much) 8...♗c5 9.♗e2 (9.♗b3) 9...♗xc3? 10.♗xc3 ♘f6 11.0-0 0-0 was bad for Black in Grosse-Führer, Vienna 2003 – 12.♗xf6! exf6 13.♗d5! and White wins a pawn.

No better is 7...a6 8.0-0 e6? (weakening d6 is too high a price for controlling d5 here) 9.♗e1 (9.♗d3 and ♗d1 is logical here) 9...♘ge7 10.♗g5 0-0 11.♗d2 b5 12.♗b3 ♗c7 13.h4!? ♗b7 14.h5 ♗a5 15.♗h6 ♘xb3 16.axb3 b4 17.♗a4 d5 18.♗xg7 ♗xg7 19.h6+ ♗g8 20.♗d4 which gives White a great position. After 20...f6, White played 21.exd5 ♗xd5 22.♘c5 in Zeier-Metzger, Schöneck 1999. Even better is 21.♘c5! which spells big trouble for Black: 21...♗b6 22.♘d7 (22.exd5 e5 23.♘xe5 fxe5 24.♗xe5) 22...♗xd4 23.♘xd4 ♗f7 24.♘c5±.

As usual it seems too risky to give up the dark-squared bishop. For example: 7...♗xc3+ 8.bxc3 ♘f6 9.0-0 (9.♗d3) 9...♘xe4 (9...♗g4 10.♗h6) 10.♗xf7+! ♗xf7 11.♗d5+ ♗g7 12.♗xe4 ♗f8 13.♗h4 (or 13.♘d4) with decent attacking chances on the dark squares.

8.h3!

Prophylaxis against a possible pin with ...g4. In fact I saw that many amateurs lose games because of not playing this small move!

Interesting but probably not too promising is 8.e5 dxe5 9.♖xd8+ ♜xd8 (9...♜xd8 10.♜g5) 10.♜xc5 0-0 11.0-0 ♕f5 12.♖b3 ♜e6 with counterplay Hrebicek-Evan, Cesky Brod 1995.

8...0-0

Miranda-Pastor, San Salvador 2001, saw White react to 8...♖d7 with 9.a3?! (both h3 and a3 is too much of a good thing: time counts for something in chess) 9...♜c8 10.♖a2 a6 11.♖e2 b5 12.♖d2 ♜c7 13.♜g5 ♜e5 14.f4 ♜c4 and Black was very OK.

9.0-0



9...b6

For 9...a6 10.♜e1 see the next game Kogan-Bemporad, Genova 2002.

In case of 9...♖d7 10.♜e1 ♜c8 11.♜d5 ♜xd5 12.exd5 ♜e5 13.♖b3 b5 14.c3 ♜xf3+ 15.♜xf3 the pressure on e7 is unpleasant, and this gives White a long-term advantage. White kept his edge in Duarte-Limberg, Balneario Camboriu 2005, after 15...e5!? 16.dxe6 (16.a4) 16...fxe6 17.♜g3 d5 18.♖f4. 10.♜e1

Also good is 10.♜e2 ♖b7 11.♜g5 with ♜ad1 coming up.

10...♖b7



11.♜d5!?

I wanted to play a quick c3 to close the diagonal of Black's Dragon bishop. Moreover, after a possible exchange on d5 I will get the e-file for my rook to press down on e7.

Other normal moves where 11.♜e2 and 11.♜g5.

11...♜d7

White retains an edge after 11...♜a5 12.♜xf6+ ♖xf6 13.♜d5 (13.♜d3) 13...♜c7 14.c3 ♜c4 15.♜e2.

12.c3

My computer engine comes up with the original idea to exchange Black's c6-knight with 12.♖b5!? a6 13.♖xc6 ♖xc6 14.♜g5 ♜e8 15.♜d4 ♖b7 16.♜d2. This seems slightly better for White, just compare the pieces.



12...e6

Black is aiming for complications, but he

needed to be accurate with 12...d5! 13. dxe5 dxe5 14. b3 (14. g5!? f6 15. dxf6+ h8 16. d5 dxc4 17. ex7 d7 18. exf8 xf8 19. e2 with unclear play is an interesting option I thought about during the game) 14...e6 15. d4 e7 16. d3 f8. This seems very solid for Black, but it is clearly not why someone like Alterman plays the Dragon.

13. g5!

Otherwise Black will play ...d5 with nice active play.

13... c8

The point of my play was 13...f6 14. d4!. In fact the same idea once brought me an important win with black against Smirin, but in the English Opening! Here 14...fxg5 15. dxe6 e7 16. dxfg5! (16. dxf8+ xf8 17. d5 d6 18. b5 planning e5) 16...ce5 17. b3 seems very promising for White, but I leave it to you to have fun and analyse it deeper.

14. d3 dce5 15. dxe5 dxe5



16. f1!

After ...e6 the bishop no longer needs to stay on the a2-g8 diagonal – it has work to do on the f1-a6 diagonal. Besides, the bishop might help my king should Black manage to activate his light-squared bishop.

Just bad is 16. b3 dxe4 17. f3 c6 18. dxd6 dxf3!.

16... dxe4

Typical of Alterman, going for complications! Instead 16...f6 17. f4 d8 18. c2 and d1 gives nice pressure (just look at g7, how does he feel here?).

17. d6

I assessed that my better pieces and pressure on the e-file should promise me some edge, though I have to play very accurately in view of his possible actions with ...f5.

17... f5

Black hopes to get chances on the kingside, but f1 is doing a great defending job, and pawn e6 is left as a weakness. Still, it took me some time to refute this idea. White is slightly better after 17...b7 18. d1 as 18...f3 is met by 19. d4!.



18. a3!

This was a hard move to make. Finally I saw the plan of moving my queen to b3 and my g5-bishop to a3.

18... h6 19. e7!

White also keeps some edge after 19. f4 d7 20. f3 b7 21. d4.

19... e8 20. d1

Another piece enters the game, harmony is the key-word here!

20... b7 21. d6 d7 22. b3! d8

I had to consider many lines, but a funny one was: 22...xd6 23. xd6 e7 (23...f7 24. c4) 24. ex6! ex6 25. c4 and wins. f1 has woken up to finish the job of his friends!

23. ♖a3 f4 24. ♖c4 ♖d5

Or 24...f3 25.g3 ♖d5 26. ♖c2 ♖c6 27. ♖e3 ♖e4 28. ♖b3 with a slight pull.



25. ♖c2!

Suddenly pawn g6 is a target as well! He may have defended e6, but my queen is never tired of making trouble!

25...b5

If 25...♖c6 then 26. ♖d2.

26. ♖d2 a5

Trying to trap my bishop?

27. c4!

Another move I had to see in advance, but a pleasant one to make!

27...bxc4 28. ♖xc4 ♖c8 29. b3 ♖e5?

Black was in trouble anyway, but he over-looks something in his calculations. Here 29...♖h7 is met by 30. ♖d3!, and 29...g5 by 30. ♖g6! ♖h8 31. ♖h5.



30. ♖xe5!

Accurate calculation is always needed to finish a nice game.

30...♖xc4

30...♖xe5 31. ♖xg6+ ♖g7 32. ♖d6! was the point!

31. ♖xc4 ♖xe5 32. ♖xg6+ ♖h8

White also wins after 32...♖g7 33. ♖xe6+ ♖h8 34. ♖xg7+ ♖xg7 35. ♖xc8 ♖xc8 36. ♖d5, and after 32...♖g7 33. ♖xe6+ ♖h8 34. ♖d7!.

33. ♖xe6 ♖cd8 34. ♖d7!

1-0

This was the move that Alterman missed!

□ Arthur Kogan

■ Filippo Bemporad

Genova 2002

1. e4 c5 2. ♖c3 ♖c6 3. ♖f3 g6 4. d4 cxd4 5. ♖xd4 ♖g7 6. ♖f3

Via yet another different move order we reach our SOS subject.

6...d6 7. ♖c4 a6 8. 0-0 ♖f6 9. h3 0-0 10. ♖e1 b5

10...♖a5 11. ♖b3 ♖xb3 12. axb3 ♖d7 13. ♖d5 (13. ♖g5) 13...e6 (13...♖xd5 14. exd5 ♖c8 15. c3±) 14. ♖xf6+ ♖xf6 15. ♖xd6 ♖c6 16. ♖g3± Duarte-Pradines, Villa Martelli 2004.

10...b5 11. ♖b3



11...♖b7

In case of 11...♖a5 White can play the standard 12.♗g5 ♖b7 13.♞e2 with ♚ad1 to follow. Alternatively, also good is 12.♘d5!?. After 12...♙xb3 13.♙xb3 ♖b7 14.c3 we reach a typical position which is usually more pleasant for White, since he has more space for his pieces, and Black's two bishops are kept in check by White's pawns. In the game Elias-Tobares, Buenos Aires 2005, play continued 14...♙d7 15.♗g5 f6 16.♖h4 e6 and now, instead of the game continuation 17.♙b4?! ♙c5 18.♙d4 ♞d7 with counterplay, White could have kept a small edge with 17.♙f4 ♞e7 18.♗g3. Worse is 11...♞c7 12.♗g5 ♖b7 13.♙xf6! This is an important idea to know, since now ♙d5 comes with tempo!



13...♙xf6 (13...♙xf6 14.♙d5 or 14.a4 with a clear edge) 14.♙d5 ♞d8 15.♙xf6+ ♙xf6 16.♙d5± Mayorga-Guerra, Balneario Camboriu 2005. Instead of the last move also good are 16.a4 and 16.♞d2.

12.♗g5

12.♖f4 followed by 13.♞d2 is also a logical plan, to prepare ♖h6.

12...h6 13.♖f4 ♖a5 14.♙d5

Also possible was 14.♞d3.

14...♙xb3 15.♙xb3 ♖h7 16.♞d2?!

This mistake allows Black to demonstrate his tactical abilities. Correct was 16.♞d3 when White has a small edge.



16...♙xb3! 17.♙xf6 ♙e6 18.♙xd6 ♙xd5 19.♙xf8 ♙xe4 20.♙xg7 ♙xg7 21.♞c3+ ♖g8 22.♙e5 h5!

Black prevents 23.♗g4 and is OK now. I tried hard in the rest of the game, but Black defended well.



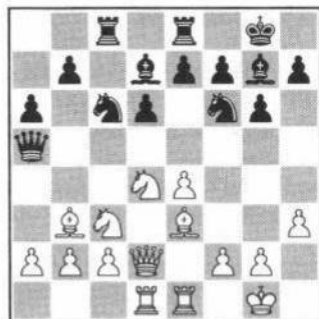
23.♞e3 ♙xc2 24.♞c1 ♞d5 25.♖h2 ♞c8 26.♞f4 ♞b7 27.g4 hxg4 28.♙xg4 ♙f5 29.♙f6+ ♖g7 30.♞xc8 ♞xc8 31.♞e5 ♞c2 32.♖g2 ♞xb3 33.f3 ♞c2+ 34.♖g3 ♞c1

Now I have to be satisfied with a perpetual. 35.♙h5+ ♙f8 36.♞d6+ ♖g8 37.♞d8+ ♖h7 38.♙f6+ ♖g7 39.♙e8+ ♙f8 40.♙c7+ ♖g7 41.♙e8+ ♙f8 ½-½

My inspiration for this surprising opening idea was derived from a great game by Mikhail Tal. Here it is with some brief notes.

□ Mikhail Tal
 ■ Curt Hansen
 Reykjavik 1986

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4
 ♕f6 5.♖c3 g6 6.♗c4 ♗g7 7.0-0 0-0
 8.h3 ♕c6 9.♗e3 ♗d7 10.♞e1 ♞c8
 11.♗b3 ♜a5 12.♞d2 ♞fe8 13.♞ad1
 a6



14.♕f3!

With more space it is logical to keep pieces on the board, but Tal was one of the first grandmasters to introduce this 'simple plan' here.

14...b5 15.♗h6 ♕d8

William Watson later tried 15...♗h8. After 16.♕g5 ♕e5 Chandler (London 1987) played 17.♞f4 ♕c4 18.♕d5 ♗c6 19.c3 ♗xd5 20.♞xd5 ♗g7 and the game ended in a draw. Jansa-Watson, Gausdal 1988, went 17.f4 ♕c4 18.e5! ♕h5 19.♞f2 with an attack.

However, even stronger was 16.e5! when White gets a nice initiative. A line I really like, runs 16...b4 17.exf6 bxc3 18.♗xf7+!! ♕xf7 19.♕g5+ ♕xf6 (19...♕g8 20.f7 mate) 20.♞xd6+!! exd6 21.♞xd6+ ♗e6 22.♞dx6+ ♞xe6 23.♞xe6+. Did you ever

see such a mate?

16.♕d4

With ♕f5-ideas 'à la Tal'. Possible was 16.e5!? dxe5 17.♗xg7 ♕xg7 18.♕xe5 ♗e6 19.♞e3 with an initiative.

16...♞c5

White is better after 16...e5 17.♗xg7 ♕xg7 18.♕f5+! ♗xf5 19.exf5.

17.a3 ♗xh6 18.♞xh6 ♞h5 19.♞f4 ♕e6 20.♗x6 ♗x6



21.g4!?

Tal plays creative chess as he did in the good old days! With 21.g4 he is trying to trap the black rook! In fact he could also play the simple 21.♕xe6 fxe6 22.e5! dxe5 23.♞e3 with a serious positional edge.

21...♞xh3 22.f3 b4

Less clear was 22...h5! 23.g5 ♕h7 24.♕g2 (24.♕xe6 fxe6 25.♕g2 ♞f8) 24...♗d7 25.♕f5 gxf5 26.♕xh3 fxe4+ 27.♕h4! exf3 28.♕xh5.

23.axb4 ♞xb4 24.♕g2 ♞xb2 25.♕d5! ♗xd5 26.exd5 ♕xd5 27.♗d2 ♞h4 28.♕g3!

Suddenly, after the smoke has cleared Black appears to be just lost.

28...♕c3 29.♞a1 ♕e2+ 30.♕xe2 ♞f6 31.g5! 1-0

CHAPTER 10

Jeroen Bosch

Chasing the 'Trompowsky' Bishop



1.d4 d5 2..g5 f6

With **1.d4 d5 2..g5** White has his bishop shooting in thin air.

This is an irregular opening that resembles the Trompowsky (1.d4 f6 2..g5). Not surprisingly it has often been played by Trompowsky expert Julian Hodgson. Should Black continue with the natural 2...f6, then his pawns will be doubled following 3..xf6.

Equalizing is perhaps not Black's biggest problem. A reliable (but somewhat boring) system is 2...h6 3..h4 c6 4.f3 ♖b6 5.b3 ..f5 for example.

We set ourselves the task here to surprise our opponent and achieve a tense situation

where Black can play for the win. That is best done with

2...f6!?

This ugly move is what this SOS is all about. Rather than putting the question to the bishop with the natural 2...h6 we block the natural development square of the knight and weaken the a2-g8 diagonal. So much for sensible opening play!

However, to mention two very concrete and positive points now:

- after 3..h4 Black has 3...h6 planning 4...f5 to further harass the bishop, and
- after 3..f4 the extra tempo (...f6) may turn out useful in preparation of ...e5.

□ Victor Mikhalevski

■ Leonid Milov

Dieren 1997

1.d4 d5 2.♙g5 f6 3.♙h4 ♘h6 4.e3

The main alternative is 4.f3 – see the next game Drazic-Zhang Pengxiang. Neither 4.c4 ♘f5, nor 4.♘f3 ♘f5 5.♙g3 h5 can worry Black. In fact Black has a bright future in both cases.

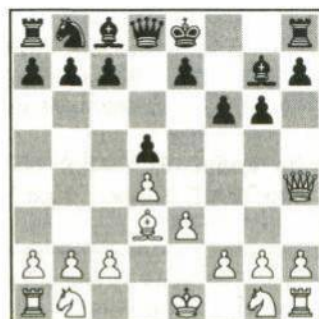
4...♘f5 5.♙g3

Not forced, as White has 5.♙d3.



A simple solution now is 5...♘c6 6.♙g3 ♘b4 7.♙e2 ♘xg3 8.hxg3 ♙f5 9.♙a3 e5 and Black held a slight initiative in Kasic-Volkov, Korinthos 2002. However, Black more often just takes the bishop, or continues his ambitious strategy with 5...h5.

● 5...♘xh4 6.♙h5+ g6 7.♙xh4 ♙g7



Owing to his bishop pair Black is absolutely fine. Some examples:

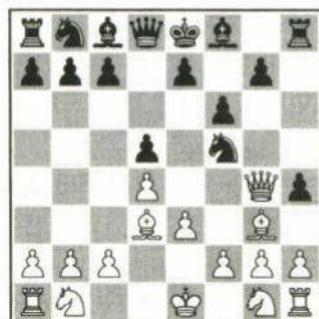
– 8.♘d2 c5 9.c3 ♘c6 10.♘gf3 ♙b6 11.♙b1 0-0 12.0-0 f5, Lukasiewicz-Fressinet, Cannes 1998.

– 8.♘c3 ♘c6 9.a3 e5 10.dxe5 ♘xe5 11.0-0-0 c6 12.e4 d4 13.♘ce2 ♙e6, Biriukov-Yagupov, Tula 2004.

– 8.c4 ♘c6 9.a3 e5 10.♘c3 exd4 with a superior game in A.Smith-Bosch, Manchester 1997.

● 5...h5. This is what I played the second time around. Now 6.♙xf5 is a sad necessity. In Rogers-Bosch, Hoogeveen 1997, Black's game was preferable following 6...♙xf5 7.h3 e6 8.♙g3 h4 9.♙h2 c5 10.♙xb8 ♙xb8 11.♘f3 ♘f7.

The problem for White is that 6.♙g3? runs into 6...h4. Now 7.♙g4



should be the justification of White's play. This position has occurred in practice, when Black settled for 7...e6 8.♙g6+ ♘e7 9.♙f4 ♙d7, and for 7...hxg3 8.♙g6+ ♘d7 9.♙xf5+ e6.

However, as Ian Rogers pointed out to me in the post mortem of our game, Black wins on the spot with 7...♘d6! 8.♙g6+ ♘f7 9.♙f4 e5 10.dxe5 fxe5 11.♙xe5 ♙h6!. Perhaps one of our SOS readers will be able to strike in this way!

As an afterthought, 5.♘f3?! is dubious since 5...g5 6.♙xg5 (6.♙g3 h5) 6...fxg5 7.♘xg5 is

hardly enough should you not fall for 7...e6? 8.♖h5+ ♔d7!! 9.♘f7 ♕e8 10.g4! Fernandes-Mellado Trivino, Elgoibar 1998. Decent moves are 7...♗d6, 7...♘g7 or even 7...h5. 5...h5



Black is punishing White for his frivolous 2.♗g5. He consistently chases the bishop (2...f6, 3...♘h6 and 4...♘f5, and now 5...h5 threatening 6...h4) aiming to gain a structural advantage. Therefore 5...♘g3 would have been all wrong. After 6.hxg3 White's structure is preferable (...f6 is weakening and the open h-file favours White too).

Unwilling to acquiesce into something like 6.h4 ♘g3 7.fxg3 White is now forced to seek complications with

6.♗e2!?

For 6.♗d3? h4 transposes to our comments above (5.♗d3 h5 6.♗g3? h4).

6...h4 7.♗h5+ ♔d7



Clearly, this SOS makes for exciting chess! Black must mind his king, but far more concretely White's dark-squared bishop is trapped.

8.♗f4

This is best. White has also started a counter-attack on the knight with either 8.♗g6 or 8.♗g4. Let's have a look:

– 8.♗g6 ♘xe3 (8...e6 9.♗f4 ♘e7 10.♗d3 ♘a6 11.c3 ♘xg6 12.♗xg6 ♕e8 13.♗xe8+ ♔xe8 and Black is better in the ending, Piankov-Benitah, La Fère 2003; 8...hxg3 9.♗xf5+ e6 followed by 10...gxf2+ is a decent alternative) 9.fxex3 hxg3 10.♗g4+ e6 11.♘f3 ♗d6 12.♘c3 c6 13.0-0-0 gxh2 14.e4 gave White some compensation in Kerkmeester-Kroeze, Enschede 1998.

– 8.♗g4 e6 (8...hxg3 9.♗xf5+ e6) 9.♗f4 g5 10.e4 dxe4 11.♗c1 and this position may be compared to our main game after White's 10th move. The inclusion of ♗g4 and ...e6 should favour Black.

8...g5

Finally trapping the bishop. White can save it though at the cost of a pawn.

9.e4 dxe4 10.♗c1

Back at square one! White has made 5 out of the first 10 moves with this bishop.

10...c6

Not 10...e6 11.d5!.



11.♘c3

Just bad is 11...g4? ♖c7 (even stronger than 11...e6) 12.♗e2 ♘d6 (12...h3! 13.g3 – 13.♗xh3 ♚xh3 14.gxh3 ♘h4; 13.gxh3 ♘h4 – 13...♗e3 14.♗xe3 ♗xg4) 13.♗xc8 ♚xc8 14.♗bc3 h3! 15.g3 ♚g4 and Black had achieved a winning position in the blitz game Adams-Van Wely, Wijk aan Zee 1998.

11...♖c7

Now d4 is attacked, so there is nothing better than pushing the d-pawn with

12.d5 e6

Interesting is 12...e5 which has not been tested yet.

13.dxc6 ♚xd1+

Deserving of attention is 13...♗xc6.

14.♗xd1



14...♗b4

Not the only move, but let's respect the stem game.

In Galyas-I.Almasi, Budapest 2000, Black preferred 14...e3!?, to fracture his adversary's pawn structure. After 15.fxe3 he should perhaps have preferred 15...♗xc6 to 15...bxc6 16.e4 ♘d4 17.e5! with a slight edge for White.

That the ending in the diagram position is fine for Black is easily shown by means of my 1997 (New in Chess Yearbook 42) suggestion of 14...♗xc6 15.♗xe4 ♗e7 when Black is comfortable in the ending.

15.♗d2

15.cxb7 ♗xb7 gives dangerous play along the diagonal.

15...♗xc3

Not obligatory. Other moves are 15...e3 and 15...♗xc6.

16.♗xc3 e5 17.cxb7 ♖xb7 18.f3 ♗e3

18...e3 is a worthwhile option. 19.♗f2 and now 19...♗xd1+ 20.♗xd1 ♗f5 gave equal chances. Black could have retreated his knight to f5 (planning ...e3+ after all), since 19...♗f5 20.fxe4 fails to 20...♗g3! 21.hxg3 hxg3+ 22.♗xg3 ♚xh1.

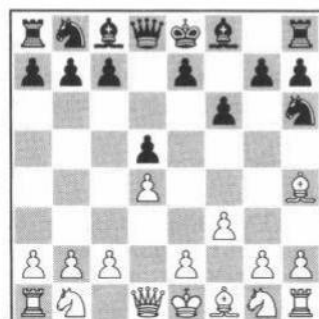
Theoretically it is clear that Black has few problems following 3.♗h4 ♘h6 4.e3 ♗f5.

□ Sinisa Drazic

■ Zhang Pengxiang

Cannes 2005

1.d4 d5 2.♗g5 f6 3.♗h4 ♘h6 4.f3



White returns the compliment. Drazic blocks the natural square of his knight to save his Trompowsky bishop any further embarrassments. It will find some rest on f2. Black has plenty of opportunities now.

4...c5

Attacking the centre and possibly taking advantage of the fact that the dark-squared bishop is no longer there to protect the queenside (...♚b6). Playable, though a bit

passive is 4...c6, which I won't go into. Here 4...e5 5.dxe5 ♟f5 6.♟f2 fxe5 7.e4 dxe4 8.♟xd8+ ♟xd8 9.fxe4 ♟d6 10.♟c3 was agreed drawn in Dudas-Nemeth, Budapest 2000. However, since that is Black's maximum result from this boring (and slightly worse) queenless middlegame we will ignore 4...e5 too.

Worthy of attention (as an alternative to the text) is 4...♟c6 5.♟c3 ♟f5 (or 5...e6 6.♟d2 ♟b4 7.0-0-0 ♟f5 8.♟f2 ♟d6 9.e3 ♟a5 Bistrikova-Stiazhkina, St Petersburg 2001) 6.♟f2 e5 7.dxe5 d4



which is good for Black. In Chepukaitis-Novik, Internet 2002, there followed 8.g4 dxc3 9.♟xd8+ ♟xd8 10.gxf5 cxb2 with an excellent game.

5.dxc5

Black is superior in the centre following this, but White increases the radius of his bishop for soon it will arrive on f2. This is why the alternatives 5.e3 and 5.c3 to bolster the centre won't frighten the second player.

5.e3 ♟c6 6.♟c3 e6 7.♟f2 a6!? was all right for Black in Fries Nielsen-Klimov, Stockholm 1998.

5.c3 and now:

– 5...♟c6 6.dxc5 (perhaps not fully in line with his previous move) 6...e5 7.♟f2 (7.b4 a5 8.b5 ♟a7 9.♟f2 ♟xb5) 7...♟f5 8.e4!? dxe4 9.♟xd8+ ♟xd8 10.♟d2 exf3 11.gxf3

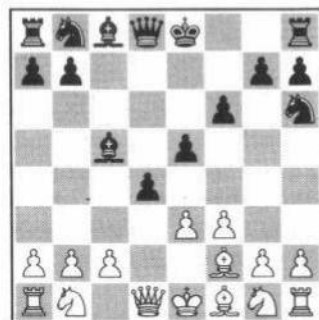
♟e7 and Black had a slight edge in Bonin-Lapshun, Parsippany 2001.

– 5...cxd4 6.cxd4 ♟c6 7.e3 e5!? (quiet play gives approximately equal chances) 8.♟c3 ♟f5 9.♟f2 ♟e6 (9...♟b4) 10.♟ge2 ♟b4 11.♟g3 ♟a5 and Black had the initiative in Lapshun-Nakamura, New York 2002.

– 5...♟b6 6.♟d2 e6 7.e4 (7.g4?! ♟c6 8.♟f2 e5 9.e3 ♟e6 10.♟e2 ♟e7 11.♟g2 0-0 12.0-0 ♟ad8 and Black's position is superior, Alonso-Alvarez Ibarra, Bizkaia 2004) 7...♟c6 8.♟e2 dxe4 9.fxe4 ♟e7 10.♟f2 0-0 11.h3 f5! 12.e5 ♟d8 13.♟c2 ♟d7 14.♟d2 cxd4 15.♟xd4 ♟xd4 16.♟xd4 ♟h4+ 17.♟d1 ♟c7 with a clear edge for Black in M.Houska-Prié, London 1994.

5...♟f5

Going for a sharp ending. Drazic has also encountered 5...e5 6.♟f2 d4 (6...♟a6 7.e4 dxe4 8.♟xd8+ ♟xd8 9.♟xa6 bxa6 10.♟c3 was slightly better for White in Drazic-Brancaleoni, Assisi 2003) 7.e3 ♟xc5



8.exd4 ♟xd4 (8...exd4!? 9.♟c4 ♟f5 10.♟e2 ♟c6 11.c3 ♟e3 12.♟xe3 dxe3 looks OK for Black, Chepukaitis-Milov, fide.com 2002) 9.♟xd4 exd4 10.♟b5+ (10.♟c4 ♟c6 – 10...♟f5! – 11.♟d2 ♟d7?! – 11...♟f5 12.♟e2+ ♟f8 – 12.♟b3 ♟c7 13.♟d2 ♟f5 14.♟b5 ♟d5 15.♟xc6 bxc6 16.0-0-0 is suspicious for Black, Clarke-Lalic, Belfast 2001) 10...♟c6 11.c3 0-0 12.♟e2 ♟e8?!

(12...♟f5 13.♙xc6 bxc6 14.♜xd4 – 14.cxd4 ♚e8 15.0-0 c5! – 14...♜b8!? and Black has excellent compensation for the pawn) 13.cxd4 ♟f5 14.0-0 ♟e3 15.♞b3+ ♜h8 16.♞f2 ♜xd4 (16...♙f5 17.♙bc3) 17.♜xd4 ♞xd4 18.♞d2 (18.♙xe8 ♟d1 19.♞c2 ♙f5 20.♞d2 ♞xf2+ 21.♞xf2 ♜xf2 22.♜xf2 ♞xe8 23.♟c3 is equal) 18...♞c5? (18...♞e5! 19.♙xe8? – 19.♟a3 ♙e6 – 19...♟g4! is the saving resource when Black's chances are preferable) 19.♙xe8 ♟c2+ 20.♜f1 ♟xa1 21.♞c3 ♞xc3 22.♟xc3 ♙f5 23.♙a4 and White won the ending in Drazic-Geenen, Milan 2002.

6. ♙f2 d4



Staking a big claim. Black is vastly superior if he will be allowed to continue with ...e5, ...♙xc5 and ...♟c6. Therefore Drazic now forces an unorthodox ending with

7.g4

There now follows a forced sequence.

7...♙e3 8.♙xe3 dxe3 9.♞xd8+ ♜xd8

10.♟c3 e5 11.0-0-0 ♙d7!

For the moment White has a lead in development. However, how should he untangle his kingside? Black may worry about his e3-pawn, but clearly it could be the nail in White's coffin. One could call this position double-edged, but I would prefer Black who holds more space and controls the dark squares.



12.f4

This pawn sacrifice must be correct. White absolutely has to keep the initiative and find some means to develop his kingside. The following game was extremely depressing from White's point of view: 12.♟e4 ♟a6 13.g5 f5 14.♟d6 ♙xd6! (14...♜c7 15.♟f7 ♞g8 16.♟xe5 ♙e6 17.f4±) 15.♞xd6 (15.cxd6 f4 and White's knight will never be able to enter the game. Not that the game is any better) 15...♜c7 16.♞d3 f4! 17.♙h3 ♞ad8 18.♙xd7 ♞xd7 19.♟h3 ♞hd8 and Black easily won. He is simply a piece up, as White's knight will never go beyond the squares h3 and g1. Mohrlok-Ter Minasian, Germany Bundesliga B 1999/00.

12...exf4 13.♙g2 ♜c8 14.b4 a5 15.♟d5



Drazic has managed to create some real

threats. His opponent is up to the task though. The subsequent exchange sacrifice is forced but strong.

15...♖a6! 16.♟b6+

Biting the bullet, perhaps he could wait with 16.c3.

16...♞xb6 17.cxb6 ♜xb4

Black has huge compensation for the exchange in the form of one pawn, the bishop pair, space, and control over the dark squares. White must worry about several loose pawns and his development.

18.h3 ♜b5!?

Or 18...♞a3+ 19.♟b1 ♜c5.

19.c3?

To exchange at least one of Black's powerful bishops. But White loses too much material in the process.

19...♜xc3 20.♞d5 ♜c6 21.♞c5 ♜d4 22.♞c4 ♜xb6



23.h4?!

I would prefer 23.♜xc6 ♜xc6 24.♞xf4.

23...♜c7 24.♜xc6 ♜xc6 25.♟h3

At least White has finally managed to disentangle his kingside.

25...f3 26.exf3 ♜e5

Eliminating more material by exchanging his e-pawn for two of White's kingside pawns.

27.♞c3 ♜xf3 28.♞xe3 ♜xh4 29.♞e7 ♞g8 30.♞d1 ♜g6



Just in time to check White's activity. With three pawns and a bishop versus a rook Black should win. The rest is a 'matter of technique' as they say.

31.♞e4 ♞d8 32.a4 h6 33.♞xd8+ ♜xd8 34.♜c2 ♜d7 35.♜b3 ♜e5 36.♟f4 g5 37.♟h5 ♜e6 38.♜c3 ♜b6 39.♞e2 ♜c5 40.♜b3 ♜f7!

Planning ...♜g6 and ...♜xg4. White's reply is the best practical chance. But with so much material behind he will never succeed in setting up the desired light-square blockade.

41.♞xe5 fxe5 42.♟g3 ♜g6 43.♜c4 ♜f2 44.♜e4 ♜e1 45.♜c5

Or 45.♜d5 h5 46.gxh5+ ♜xh5 47.♜xe5 g4 48.♜f4 ♜h4 and wins.

45...h5 46.♜d3 ♜g3 47.gxh5+ ♜xh5 48.♜d5 g4 49.♜e4 ♜h4 50.♜c5 ♜f4 51.♜d3 g3 52.♜f3 ♜h3 53.♜e1 ♜d2 0-1

□ Miklos Galyas

■ Gabor Kallai

Budapest 2000

1.d4 d5 2.♞g5 f6 3.♜f4

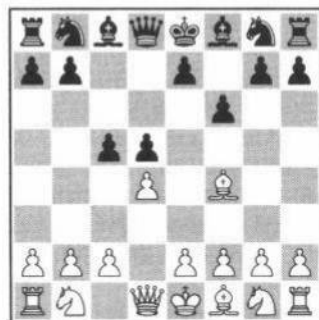
Perhaps this is more sensible than 3.♜h4 which allows Black to execute his main idea with 3...♜b6. White sort of returns to SOS-waters (1.d4 d5 2.♜f4 was discussed in

SOS-5) aiming to demonstrate that the extra tempo (2...f6) is harmful for Black. It is true that Black can no longer harmoniously develop with ...f6. However, as we will see below, Black can make use of the extra tempo to prepare ...e5.



3...c6

Developing a piece and preparing ...e5. Worthy of serious attention is 3...c5.



● 4...xb8. A characteristic move that is also a motif in the Baltic Defence (1.d4 d5 2.c4 f5). White removes the b8-knight to gain control over square d4 and to speed up his development (f5 check might make sense soon). 4...xb8 5.c3 e6 (highly ambitious is 5...e5 6.e3 cxd4 7.exd4 f6 8.f5+ f7 - 8...f7!? 9.dxe5 f5 - 9.fxd7+ f7 10.f2 e7 11.0-0 0-0 12.f3 f6 13.f4 f5). White removes the b8-knight to gain control over square d4 and to speed up his development (f5 check might make sense soon). 4...xb8 5.c3 e6 (highly ambitious is 5...e5 6.e3 cxd4 7.exd4 f6 8.f5+ f7 - 8...f7!? 9.dxe5 f5 - 9.fxd7+ f7 10.f2 e7 11.0-0 0-0 12.f3 f6 13.f4 f5).

13.f4 f5 14.f5+ f7 15.f6 f7 16.f4 f5 with a slight edge for Black in Argandona Riveiro-Bellon Lopez, Mislata 2003) 6.e3 (6.e4 dxe4 7.d5 Hodgson-Steingrimsdottir, German Bundesliga 2002/03, is not very convincing after 7...exd5 8.f4 d5 9.e6) 6...a6 7.f3 f5 8.g4 f6 9.gxf5 c4 10.f1 exf5 11.g2 f6 12.f2 e6 13.0-0 0-0 14.a3 f5 15.b4 f6 16.f4 f5 with excellent play. Torre-Nielsen, Bled Olympiad 2002.

● 4.e3 f6 5.f3 g5!? (or 5...g4 6.f2 cxd4 7.exd4 e6 8.c3 f6 9.g3 f7 10.f4 f5 11.fxe2 f7 12.0-0 g5 13.f3 f6 with an easy game for Black. Akopian-Popov, Novgorod 1999. While 5...f5 6.f3 f7 7.f3 g5!? 8.g3 f6 9.fxd3 c4 10.f2 e6 11.e4 0-0 12.h3 f6 was also fine for Black in Sucher-Schmitt, Austria Staatsliga B 2001/02) 6.g3 h5 7.h3



7...f6 (or 7...cxd4 8.exd4 f6 9.f3 f5 10.f3 f6 - 10...f6 11.f6+ - 11.f6+ f7 12.a3 f6 13.f3 a6 14.f4 e6 with the better game in Okrajek-Levin, Bad Wörishofen 2000) 8.c3 f6 9.f3 f5 10.f3 c4 11.f2 c3 12.f3 13.f2 e6 14.f2 d6 15.f1 h4 16.g4 f7 17.f6+ f7 18.f2 f8 19.e4 f4 gave Black a great game in Kornev-Sveshnikov, Samara 2000.

4. ♘f3

Rather meek is 4.c3 e5 5. ♘g3 ♘e6 6.e3 ♘d6 7. ♘b5 ♘e7 8.dxe5 fxe5 9. ♘f3 ♘g4 10. ♖b3 ♘xf3 11.gxf3 0-0 12. ♘d2 ♖h8 Kallio-Krasenkow, Copenhagen 2003. The same goes for 4.e3 e5 5. ♘g3 ♘d6 6. ♘f3 ♘ge7 7.c4 exd4 8. ♘xd4 ♘xd4 9. ♖xd4 ♘b4+ 10. ♘c3 c5 Chepukaitis-Bezgodov, St Petersburg 1995.

4... ♘g4

Here 4...e5 5.dxe5 fxe5 6. ♘xe5 ♖f6 is a Blackmar-Diemer with colours reversed (remember the extra tempo 2...f6).



The point is that White has not chosen the best set-up against the Blackmar-Diemer here. Have fun!

A serious alternative for the text is 4... ♘f5. Bad now is 5.c4?! because of 5...e5! 6.cxd5 (6.dxe5 ♘b4+) 6... ♘b4 (primitive but it works!) 7.e4 ♘xe4 8. ♖a4+ c6 9.dxe5 ♘xb1 10. ♖xb1 ♖xd5 11. ♘e2 ♖e4! 12.0-0 ♖xf4 and White had insufficient compensation for the piece in Adams-Morozevich, Tilburg 1993.

Therefore play usually continues with 5.e3 and now: 5...e6 6.a3 (6. ♘h4 ♘e4 7.f3 ♘g6 8. ♘xg6 hxg6 9.c4 ♘d6 10. ♘xd6 ♖xd6 11.c5 ♖d7 12. ♘b5 ♘ge7 13. ♘c3 e5 with equality. Rufino Bengoetxea-Sion Castro, Mondariz 1995) 6...g5!? (6... ♘d6 7. ♘g3 ♘ge7 8.c4 0-0 9. ♘c3 ♘g6 10.b4 a6 11. ♖b3

with a slight edge, Hodgson-Shaw, Aberdeen 1996) 7. ♘g3 h5



8.h3 and now practice has seen two quick draws.

– 8... ♘d6 9. ♘xd6 cxd6!? 10. ♘d3 ♘ge7 11. ♘c3 ♖b6 12. ♘xf5 ♘xf5 13. ♖d3 ½-½ Galyas-Gyimesi, Budapest 2000.

– 8...h4 9. ♘h2 ♘d6 10. ♘xd6 ♖xd6 11.c4 ½-½ Kireev-Nester, Olomouc 2006.

**5. ♘bd2**

There are other moves of course:

– 5. ♘g3 e6 (5... ♘h6 6.e3 ♘f5 7. ♘d3 ♖d7 8.c3 and now Black played in Blackmar-Diemer style with 8...e5!? 9.dxe5 fxe5 10. ♘xe5 0-0-0 11. ♘g3 ♘c5, Bleis-Hector, Copenhagen 2005) 6.e3 ♘h6 7.h3 ♘h5 8. ♘e2 ♘f7 9.c4 ♘f5 10. ♘h2 a6 11. ♘c3±, Nei-Sherbakov, Jyväskylä 1994.

– 5.h3 ♖h5 (5...♙xf3 6.exf3 e5) 6.c3 ♜d7 7.♙bd2 0-0-0 8.b4 e5 9.♙e3 e4 10.♙g1 f5 with unclear play in Burmakin-Ruck, Oberwart 1999.

– 5.c3 ♜d7 6.♙bd2 0-0-0 (or 6...e6 7.♙a4?! ♙ge7 8.h3 ♖h5 9.e3 g5 10.♙h2 ♙g6 11.♙b3 ♙c8 12.♙b5 a6 13.♙e2 – 13.♙xb7 ♙a7 – 13...♙b6 14.♙fd2 ♙a4 15.0-0-0?? ♙xc3 0-1, Lank-Vigorito, Las Vegas 2005) 7.h3 ♙xf3! 8.♙xf3 e5 9.dxe5 ♙f5 10.e3 fxe5 11.g4 ♙e6 with satisfactory play in Arduman-Claesen, Istanbul Olympiade 2000.

– 5.c4 dxc4 (5...e5) 6.d5 e5 7.♙c1 ♙b4 8.e4 c6 9.a3 ♙d3+ (9...f5!?, 9...♙xf3 10.gxf3 ♙d3+ 11.♙xd3 cxd3) 10.♙xd3 cxd3 11.dxc6 bxc6 12.0-0 with some compensation, Morozovich-Van Wely, Monaco blind 2005.

5...♙xd4!?

Black is taking full advantage of his extra tempo (2...f6). This leads to an unclear game.

6.♙xd4

Bad is 6.♙xc7? ♙xc7 7.♙xd4 e5 8.h3 ♙d7 9.♙b3 d4 and without any complications Black had a nice structural edge, Todorovic-Yeo, Belgrade 2003.

6...e5 7.h3



Without this clever little move White would be bad off. Black now has to decide whether

to (passively) keep the bishop on the c8-h3 diagonal or to play 7...♙h5 which allows (a future) ♙e6.

7...♙h5

This is best. White has 8.e4 in reply to either 7...♙d7 or 7...♙c8.

– 7...♙d7 8.♙e3?! (8.e4!) 8...exd4 9.♙xd4 c5 10.♙e3 ♙c7 11.♙f3 ♙c6 12.g3 ♙d6 13.♙g2 ♙e7 with the better game, Mitura-M.Jirovsky, Pribram 2000.

– 7...♙c8 8.e4! exf4 9.♙h5+ g6 10.♙xd5 ♙xd5 11.exd5 a6 12.0-0-0 and White is better in the ending, Vasilev-Jordanov, Plovdiv 2004.

8.♙e6

Direct play, but this is possibly not White's best option.

– 8.c4 deserves full attention, if only because it was Hodgson's choice. 8...exd4 (bad is 8...exf4 because of 9.♙b3 or 9.♙e6 ♙d6 10.cxd5; 8...♙f7 9.♙b3 ♙e7 is worth investigating, as is 8...dxc4 9.♙e6 ♙e7) 9.♙b3 ♙d6 10.♙xd6 ♙xd6 11.♙xb7 ♙d8 12.♙xa7 (12.cxd5 ♙e7 13.♙xa7) 12...dxc4 13.♙a4+ ♙d7?! 14.♙xd7+ ♙xd7 15.♙xc4 and White was a pawn up, Hodgson-Yeo, British Championship, Southampton 1986.

– 8.♙xe5?! fxe5 9.♙e6 ♙e7 10.♙xf8 0-0-0 is nice for Black, Grant-Crouch, Scottish Championship, Aviemore 1997.

– 8.g4 ♙f7 9.e3 exf4 10.exf4 and now, for example, 10...♙e7+ rather than 10...♙d6 11.♙e2+ ♙e7, Galyas-Szabolcsi, Budapest 1999.

– Tricky is 8.c3 exf4 (8...♙d7) 9.♙b3 ♙b8? (9...♙f7 10.♙xb7 ♙e7) 10.♙e6 ♙d7 11.♙xf4 (11.♙xd5!) 11...♙f7, Bombek-Priborsky, Pardubice 2005.

8...♙d6 9.♙xf8 exf4

The f4-pawn obstructs White's kingside development (he would like to play e3 or g3). The f8-knight is trapped and can be won at leisure. White's subsequent knight dance does not improve his position.



10.c4 ♖c6 11.d5 ♗b6 12.b3
♙f7 13.xh7

Simply 13.♗d2 is better.

13...♙xh7 14.♗d3 ♖h5

Or 14...♙h4!?

15.♗f3

15.0-0-0 0-0-0 16.♗f3 was preferable, yet
Black is fine after 16...♙h6.



15...a5!? 16.♙b1?!

16.♗xf4? is met by 16...a4 17.♙d4 ♗xb2

18.♙d1 ♖e5. If 16.0-0-0 then also 16...a4.

16...a4 17.♙c1 ♖h4

Black has a huge space advantage. White
now (erroneously) plays the ugly 18.g3 to be
able to complete his development.

18.g3 fxg3 19.♗xg3 g5! 20.g2 ♙e7
21.0-0 ♙e6 22.♙d3



22...♙f7

22...0-0-0 was also good.

23.e3 ♖ah8 24.f4? ♙f5 25.♗f2 g4!

26.e4

If 26.hxg4 then just 26...♙xg4.

26...dxe4

and White resigned.

His position is hopeless after 27.♗xb6 cxb6

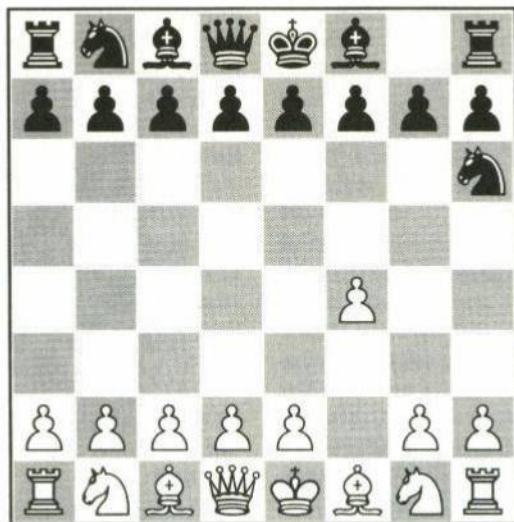
28.g4 ♙g3 29.♙fe1 gxh3 30.♙h2 ♙xe4

31.♙xe4 ♙g4.

CHAPTER 11

Dimitri Reinderman

Edgy Knight against the Bird



1.f4 Qh6

In the database you will find few games with 1.f4 Qh6. It looks like a patzer-move, just like 1...Qa6 or 1...h5. But the move is actually good! Can you believe it? I will try to convince you with this article.

A common move in the Dutch Defence for White is Qh3. If this move is good with white, it can't be bad with reversed colours, right?

But OK, it's not a Dutch yet after 1.f4 Qh6. Why would you want to start with 1...Qh6 instead of playing 1...d5 and then Qh6 on the third or fourth move? Well, the 'problem' with 1...d5 is that White can play 2.b3, going for a set-up which is normally not possible in the Dutch. However, if after 1...Qh6 White

plays 2.b3 on autopilot then 2...e5! will come as a nasty surprise! Indeed, 1...Qh6 is very useful then. I will analyse this in Section I.

White can also forget about the Dutch and play 2.e4, trying to prove that the knight on h6 is silly. However, after 2...d5! the square f5 becomes available for the not-so-silly knight! This will be analysed in Section II. If White wants to play a reversed Dutch, he can play a Leningrad set-up (as shown in Section III).

He can also opt for the Stonewall or the Classical Variation (both in Section IV). You will be shown some examples from grandmaster practice.

Section I – Bird-Larsen

□ Roger Pernet

■ Martin Appleberry

Paris 2004

1.f4 ♖h6 2.b3

I started playing f4 and b3 myself after buying the 1989 book of Soltis, *Bird-Larsen Attack*. It is a dangerous system against players who are not familiar with Nimzo-Indian positions. A nice example is 1.e3!? ♖f6 2.f4 d5 3.♖f3 c5 4.b3 ♖c6 5.♗b5 ♗d7 6.♗b2 e6 7.♗xc6 bxc6?! 8.0-0 ♗e7 9.d3 0-0 10.♞e2 a5 11.♖c3 ♞c7 12.♖a4 ♗c8 13.c4 ♖d7 14.♗a3 ♞e8 15.♞ac1 ♗a6 16.g3 ♗d6 17.e4 f5 18.e5 ♗e7 19.h3 ♞f8? 20.cxd5 cxd5 21.♖d4 ♞fe8 22.♗xe6 and White won in Reinderman-Diepeveen, Nijmegen 1992.

As this game shows, there are different move orders to play the Bird-Larsen. In 1989 Soltis recommended the move order 1.f4 and 2.b3 (and ♖f3 normally on the 4th or 5th move). In a later book (*Winning with 1.f4*, 1992) he preferred the sequence 1.f4 and 2.♖f3 instead (playing b3 on the third or fourth move).

After 1.f4 ♖h6 2.♖f3 g6 White can still try 3.b3, but after 3...♗g7 4.♖c3 (more sensible than 4.c3 or 4.d4) 4...d5 5.e3 0-0 6.♗b2 ♖f5



Black has the plan of 7...♖c6 and 8...e5, or 8...d4. White should play 7.g4, and after

7...d4!? (7...♖d6) 8.♖a4 ♖d6 9.h3 c5!? 10.♖xc5 (10.exd4 cxd4 11.♖xd4 e5 looks dangerous for White) 10...dxe3 11.♗xg7 ♗xg7 12.♞e2 I think both sides can play for a win with even odds.

2...e5!

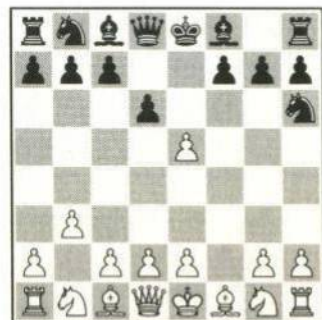
Transposing to the From's Gambit, where ♖h6 is more useful than b3.

3.fxe5

The only reasonable alternative is 3.e4, transposing to a King's Gambit, where both b3 and ♖h6 are uncommon developing moves. (Actually sometimes the bishop does go to b2 in the King's Gambit, but it prefers just to take the pawn on f4.) Black can take on f4 and continue with d5, g5, ♗e7 or even f5, but I propose 3...♗c5!?, targeting square f2.

Play might continue 4.♖f3 (on 4.♗c4 both 4...d5 and 4...♗xg1 5.♞xg1 ♞h4+ are interesting) 4...♖g4 5.♖c5 ♗f2+ (5...♖xe5 6.d4) 6.♗e2 d6 7.♖f3 ♖c6 8.d4 (8.h3 is met by 8...♗d4, and 8.♗b2 by 8...♞e7) 8...♞f6 9.c3 ♞h6 10.♞d3 0-0 with an unusual position (it looks like the bishop has used a parachute to land on f2) where Black has good compensation for the pawn.

3...d6



4.♖f3

Taking on d6 (as in the From's Gambit proper) is really too dangerous. After 4.exd6 ♗xd6 White can't really do anything about

the threat on h2, e.g. 5.♖f3 ♕g4 6.g3?! ♕xh2 7.♖xh2 ♖xg3+ 8.♖f2 g5 9.e4 g4 10.♖b2 ♖g8 11.♖e5 ♖g5



And in this position Black holds a big advantage. For example:

– 12.♖c4 ♖e6 13.♖d3 ♖xf2+ 14.♖xf2 ♖h4+ 15.♖e3 ♖c6.

– 12.♖d3 ♖xf2+ 13.♖xf2 g3.

– 12.♖b5+ ♖c6 13.♖xc6 ♖xb5 14.♖e5 f6 15.♖c4 ♖h5.

4...dxe5 5.♖c3

Of course 5.♖xe5? ♖d4 is bad, so White just develops.

5...♖c6 6.e3 g5!?



A good idea, gaining both space and time.

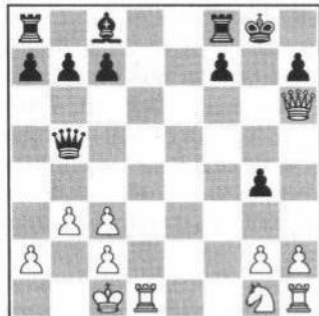
7.♖b5 ♖g7 8.♖b2 g4 9.♖g1 0-0 10.♖e2?!

Better was 10.♖ge2, which is equal.

10...♖d4

A nice shot, but not as good as 10...♖b4 11.0-0-0 c6 12.a3 cxb5 13.axb4 ♖d7 and Black is somewhat better.

11.exd4 exd4 12.0-0-0 dxc3 13.♖xc3 ♖xc3 14.dxc3 ♖g5+ 15.♖d2 ♖xb5 16.♖xh6



16...f6

Now 17...♖g5+ is a threat, since after 18.♖xg5 fxg5 the black rook becomes active and the white knight doesn't have a dream square on f4 anymore. White should now play 17.♖d2 to prevent this, planning 18.♖e2 or 18.h3.

17.h3?! ♖g5+ 18.♖xg5+ fxg5 19.hxg4 ♖xg4 20.♖f3 ♖xf3! 21.♖d4??

This immediately throws the game. After the normal 21.gxf3 ♖xf3 22.♖hg1 ♖xd1 23.♖xg5+ ♖f7 24.♖xd1 h6 Black has good winning chances.

21...♖f4

0-1

Section II – 2.e4 or 2.♖f3 g6 3.e4

In this section we will investigate 1.f4 ♖h6 2.e4 and 2.♖f3 g6 3.e4. In both cases Black should respond to e4 with ...d5.

I think including 2.♖f3 g6 is better for White than 2.e4 d5 right away. We will start our investigation with the latter and delve more deeply in the other, more accurate, line.

Variation A: 2.e4 d5

Variation B: 2.♘f3 g6 3.e4 d5

Variation A

1.f4 ♖h6 2.e4 d5



The correct response. Black never intended his knight to stay on the rim forever. After both 3.exd5 and 3.e5 the square f5 is freed for the not-so-dim knight.

3.exd5

3.e5 c5 4.♘f3 ♘c6 looks like a French or Caro-Kann Advance, but it's not so easy for White to play d4. The black knight can go to f5, or even to f7 after f6. The white-squared bishop may be exchanged for the f3-knight, but keeping it on c8 for a while should be fine too.

3...♞xd5 4.♘c3 ♞d6

As Black wants to play for the d4-square, I prefer this to 4...♞a5.

5.♘f3 ♘c6?

Here 5...g6 transposes to Variation B. Taking on f4 is met by 6.d4 with good compensation.

6.d4

After 6.♘c4 ♘g4 7.♘b5 ♞d7 8.h3 ♘xf3 9.♞xf3 a6 10.♘c3 ♘f5 Black is fine.

6...♘f5!

Blocking the knight on h6, but 6...♘g4 7.d5 is better for White. Now both 7...♘b4 and 7...0-0-0 are threats, and 7.♘e3 runs into 7...♘g4.

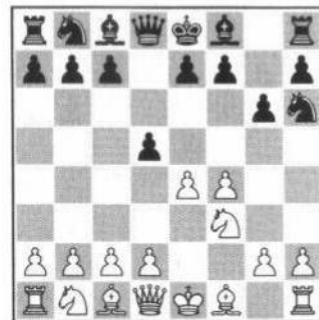
7.d5 ♖b4 8.♘d4 0-0-0



White has trouble keeping his d-pawn, while 9.♘xf5 ♘xf5 10.a3 ♘xd5 11.♘xd5 ♞xd5 12.♞xd5 ♞xd5 13.♘c4 ♘d6 14.♘xf7 ♘d4 loses the c-pawn.

Variation B

1.f4 ♖h6 2.♘f3 g6 3.e4 d5



Now White again has two choices: 4.exd5 and 4.e5.

4.exd5

The position after 4.e5 is similar to the Gurgenidze Variation (1.e4 g6 2.d4 ♘g7 3.♘c3 c6 4.f4 d5 5.e5 – not to be mistaken with Chapter 7). Black has two plans here: the classic h5/♘g4/♘f5 going for a blockade position, or the modern ♘h6/f6, attacking the

centre. In the current position, I prefer the classic plan, since in that case the bishop is better on f8 than on g7. I advise you to play through the game Sepp-Gurevich as model game for the classic plan (see the next game). However, first I will analyse if White can find a way to take advantage of the move order: 4...♖g4 5.h3 (after 5.♗e2 Black can play 5...♘f5, since 6.h3? ♘g3 is good for Black. Black will then continue with e6, h5 etc.) 5...♙xf3 6.♗xf3 ♘f5 (otherwise White will play 7.g4) 7.c3 (7.♗b3 e6 8.♗xb7 ♘d7 is dangerous for White, and 7.g4 ♘d4 8.♗d3 c5 9.c3 ♘e6 10.f5 c4 11.♗e3 gxf5 12.gxf5 ♘g7 13.e6 fxe6 14.fxe6 ♗d6 leads to an interesting position with about equal chances) 7...h5 (after 7...e6 8.g4 ♘h4 9.♗f2 ♗e7 10.d4 I prefer White, even after 10...♘f5 11.♘d1 ♗h4 12.♗f3 ♘g3 13.♗g1 ♘xf1 14.♗xf1 8.g4 (8.e6 is a nice idea, but Black just plays 8...h4) 8...hxg4 9.hxg4 ♗xh1 10.♗xh1 ♘g3



11.♗h3 (11.♗b5+ c6 12.♗f3 cxb5 13.♗xg3 e6 doesn't White give any advantage) 11...♘f1 12.♘f1 ♗d7 13.d4 ♘c6 14.♗e3 0-0-0 15.♘d2 f6. White has more space, but Black has the good bishop and a safer king's position. I think the position is about equal.

4...♗xd5 5.♘c3

Now Black must make up his mind where to place his queen.



5...♗d8

After 5...♗a5 6.d4 ♗g4 (6...♗g7 7.♘e5) 7.h3 ♗xf3 8.♗xf3 c6 (8...♘c6 9.♗b5) 9.g4 the knight on h6 is offside.

And 5...♗d6 6.d4 ♗g7 7.♘e4 ♗d5 8.♗d3 ♘c6 9.c3 ♗f5 10.♗e2 0-0 11.0-0 ♘g4 12.♗e1 ♘f6 13.♘f5 ♘xe4 14.♘xe4 is a bit better for White.

That leaves 5...♗d8, keeping an eye on d4 without letting White gain a tempo with ♘e4.

6.d4 ♗g7 7.♘e4

After 7.♗c4 0-0 8.0-0 ♘f5 9.d5 c6 Black is fine.

7...♘f5 8.c3 ♘d6 9.♗d3 ♗f5 10.♘xd6+ ♗xd6



Black has equalized. The position is somewhat similar to a position in Kasparov-Anand, New York PCA World Champion-

ship 1995 (14), after 1.e4 d5 2.exd5 ♖xd5 3.♗c3 ♗a5 4.d4 ♖f6 5.♗f3 c6 6.♗e5 ♗e6 7.♗d3 ♖bd7 8.f4 g6 9.0-0 ♗g7 10.♖h1 ♗f5. Black has good chances for a white-square blockade both after an exchange on f5 and if White moves his bishop from d3.

A good example of Black's chances in the Guregidze Variation is the following illustrative game.

□ Olav Sepp

■ Mikhail Gurevich

Brugge open 1995

1.e4 d6 2.d4 g6 3.♗c3 c6 4.f4 d5 5.e5 h5 6.♗f3 ♖h6 7.♗e3 ♗b6 8.♗a4 ♗a5+ 9.c3 ♗c7 10.♗e2 ♗g4 11.0-0 ♗f5 12.♗f2 e6



13.b4?!

White wants to reinforce the c5-square and prevent ...c5. However, in doing so White leaves a gaping hole on c4. A better idea would be 13.b3 and 14.c4, trying to open the position.

Note that on 13.h3 Black reacts with 13...♗xf3 14.♗xf3 h4. In that case White doesn't have the standard plan of g4 anymore, though Black has to pay attention not to lose his intrepid h-pawn.

13...♗d7 14.♗c5

14.♗b1 ♗b6 15.♗xb6 axb6 16.a4 is unclear

according to Gurevich, which is not really a helpful comment, I know. Black will play bishop to e7 and king to g7 when Black has two plans:

- ...♗a7 and ...♗a8, and if ♗a1 then ...b5, when a5 is met by ...b6
- the alternative plan is to go for ...c5.

If White plays g3 (planning ♗g2, h3, g4), then ...h4 is always an option – to play on the h-file.

14...♗b6!

Going for c4.

15.♗b1

After 15.♗d2 ♗xe2 16.♗xe2 Black has a superior bishop in compensation for White's space advantage.

15...♗xf3 16.♗xf3 ♗c4 17.♗e2 b6 18.♗d3 a5 19.g3



This is a common plan for White, preparing h3 and g4.

19...♗e7 20.h3 axb4 21.♗xb4

Or 21.cxb4 ♗a7 with pressure.

21...♗d7

Defending the c-pawn and connecting the rooks, so they can double on the a-file (or maybe even on the h-file).

22.g4 hxg4 23.hxg4 ♗h4 24.♗xh4 ♗xh4 25.♗g2 ♗a3 26.♗b3 ♗a7

Threatening to take on b4 and on a2, but after White's next move the bishop is needed as a defender.

27.f5 gxf5 28.gxf5 ♖a8 29.fxe6+ fxe6
30.♞f7 ♖g8 31.♞xa3 ♜xa3 32.♞f2?

Here White misses a chance: after 32.♞xe7+ ♜xe7 33.♞a6 ♜c4 34.♜xc6+ ♜f8 35.♞c8+ ♜g7 36.♜d8 ♜h6 37.♞d7+ ♜f8 38.♞c8 ♜g7 39.♞d7+ White can force a draw (but no more).

32...♞g4 33.♞f3 ♜c4 34.♜d3 ♞g6
35.♜h2 ♞h6+ 36.♜h3?

Better was 36.♜h3.

36...♜d2 37.♞f4

Not 37.♞f6!? ♜xf6 38.exf6 ♞g3! winning.

37...♜e4 38.♞f1 ♞g5 39.♞f3

39.♜f2 ♜h5 40.♜xe4 ♜xh3+ 41.♞xh3 ♞xf4+ 42.♜g3 ♞d2+ 43.♞g2 ♞xc3 also wins for Black.

39...♜d2 40.♞e2 ♜xf3+ 41.♞xf3 ♞g7
Black is a healthy exchange up.

42.♜f2 ♜g5 43.♜g4 ♜f4+ 44.♜g2 ♞g5 45.c4 ♜c7 46.cxd5 exd5
47.♞a3 ♜b7 48.♞f8 ♜e3 49.e6 ♜xd4
50.♜f3 ♜c5 51.♞h8 ♞f5+ 0-1

Section III – Leningrad

What happens if White goes for a Dutch Leningrad with colours reversed?

□ Mihai Grünberg

■ Rustam Dautov

Port Erin 2002

1.f4

We would reach the position in this game via our SOS-move order 1.f4 ♜h6 2.♜f3 g6 3.g3 d5 4.♜g2 ♜g7.

When White plays a Leningrad set-up, it's best to transpose to a position which is normally reached by 1.f4 d5 2.♜f3 g6 3.g3 ♜g7 4.♜g2 ♜h6. There is no advantage to playing 1...♜h6 in this case, but no disadvantage either.

The extra move White has compared to the Leningrad Dutch is enough not to be worse, but not enough to claim an advantage.

1...d5 2.♜f3 g6 3.g3 ♜g7 4.♜g2 ♜h6



5.d3

Going for e4 right away is the most common set-up. However, there are a lot of different set-ups that White can try:

– 5.c3 c5 6.d3 d4 transposes.

– 5.0-0 ♜f5 6.♜c3 d4 7.♜e4 ♜c6 8.c3 e5 9.fxe5 ♜xe5 10.♜xe5 ♜xe5 11.cxd4 ♜xd4+ 12.e3 ♜g7 with equality.

– 5.0-0 c5 6.e3!? (so Black can't take en passant after d3 and e4) 6...♜c6 7.d3 0-0 8.c3 b6 9.♞a4 ♞d7 10.e4 dxe4 11.dxe4 ♜d4 12.♞xd7 ♜xf3+ 13.♜xf3 ♜xd7 14.e5 ♞ad8 15.a4 f6 16.exf6 exf6 and soon a drawish ending was reached in Gurevich-Gelfand, Palma de Mallorca 1989.

– 5.0-0 ♜f5 6.d4 h5 7.♜h1 c5 8.c3 ♜d7 9.♜e5 and here Black was outplayed in Gardner-Novikov, Edmonton 2000 (2221 vs 2611!) but of course there is nothing wrong with Black's position.

– 5.0-0 0-0 6.c4 d4 7.d3 ♜c6 8.♜a3 ♜f5 9.♞b1 c5 10.♜c2 a5 11.♜h1 ♞e8 and Black was a little better in Manolov-Vasilev, Bulgarian Championship, Tsarevo 2001.

– 5.0-0 0-0 6.d3 d4 7.♜a3 c5 8.♜c4 ♜f5 9.e4 dxe3 10.c3 ♜c6 11.♜xe3 led to an equal position in Becx-Nijboer, Tilburg 2003.

5...d4 6.c3 c5 7.e4 dxe3 8.♜xe3 ♞c7

Instead of the text, 8...♜d7 is also good. Two

rounds after this game Grünberg-Rotshtein, Port Erin 2002 went: 9.0-0 0-0 10.♘a3 ♖b8 11.♙c2 b6 12.d4 ♙b7 13.♙e5 cxd4 14.♙xd7 ♗xd7 15.♙xd4 ♙xg2 16.♙xg2 ♗b5 17.♙xg7 ♙xg7 18.♗d4+ ♙g8 19.c4 ♗c6+ 20.♗d5 ♗xd5+ 21.cxd5 with an end-game that is more equal for Black than for White.

9.0-0 0-0



10.h3

To prevent 10...♙g4, but it's a bit weakening. My own experience with this position is 10.♙h1 b6 11.a4 ♙c6 12.♙a3 ♙b7 13.♙c4 ♗ad8 14.♗c2 ♙f5 15.♙g1 ♙d6 16.♙e3 e6 17.h3?! ♙f5 18.♙xf5 exf5 19.♗fe1 ♗fe8 and Black was a little better in Reinderman-David, Brussels Zonal 1993.

10...♙f5 11.♙f2 e6

Probably played with the intention of going to e7 (and d5) if White plays g4.

12.♙a3 ♙d7

Black has to be a little careful: 12...b6 13.♙b5 ♗c7 14.g4 a6 15.♙g5 ♙b7 16.♙xb7 ♗xb7 17.gxf5 axb5 18.fxe6 wins a pawn for White.

13.d4 a6 14.dxc5 ♙xc5 15.♗e2 b6 16.♙c4 ♙b7 17.g4 ♙d6

Now if White plays 18.♙fe5 (or exchanges on d6 first and then plays ♙fe5) the position is still equal. However, he sees a trick, but it is not a good one.



18.♙xb6? ♗xb6 19.b4 ♙de4 20.bxc5 ♗c7 21.♙e5 ♙xf2 22.♗xf2 ♙xg2 23.♙xg2 ♙xe5 24.fxe5 ♗xe5

Material is equal now, but White's pawns are very weak.

25.♗d4 ♗c7 26.♗d6 ♗fc8 27.♗ab1 ♗a7

There is no need to hurry.

28.♗b3 ♗xc5 29.♗xc5 ♗xc5

Black is active and has a good pawn more, so the rest is not difficult.

30.♗d1 ♙g7 31.♗d6 a5 32.♗d4 ♗ac7 33.♗a4 h5 34.gxh5 ♗xh5 35.c4 ♗cc5 36.♙f2 ♙f6 37.♙e3? ♗xh3+ 38.♙d4 ♗hh5 0-1

Section IV – Classical and Stonewall

□ Simon Williams

■ Thomas Luther

Port Erin 2003

1.f4 d5 2.e3 g6 3.♙f3 ♙g7 4.♙e2 ♙h6

Our SOS move order to reach the same position is 1.f4 ♙h6 2.♙f3 g6 3.e3 d5 4.♙e2 ♙g7.

Incidentally, Williams is an expert of the Classical Variation of the Dutch. He wrote a book about it and beat (among others) Ivan Sokolov with it.

5.0-0 0-0



6.d3

In a game between two grandmasters, White played a kind of Stonewall: 6.c4 c6 7.d4 ♟g4 8.♟b3 ♟b6 9.♟a3 ♟f5 10.♟c3?! (better is 10.c5) 10...dxc4 11.♟h1 (after 11.♟xc4 ♟xf3 12.♟xf3 ♟xd4 13.exd4 ♟xd4+ 14.♟e3 ♟xc4 15.♟xe7 ♟a6 Black is better) 11...♟d6 12.b3 cxb3 13.♟b1 ♟d7 14.♟xb3 ♟c7 and White didn't have enough for the pawn in Chernyshov-Dautov, Ohrid 2001.

6...b6 7.e4 dxe4 8.dxe4 b7 9.g5

A strange move, but e4 was not easy to defend: 9. ♖bd2 runs into 9... ♗g4 and after 9. ♗d3 Black plays 9... ♖d7 and 10... ♗c5 is annoying.

9... ♖xd1 10. ♖xd1 ♘a6



11.e5

I wouldn't let ♖h6 get out of his cage yet:
11. ♖c3 ♖c5 12. ♕e3 ♕xc3 13. ♕xc5 ♕xb2

14. ♖ab1 ♙f6 15.e5 is equal.

11...f6d8 12.fxd8+ fxd8 13.a3 f5
14.g4 d4 15.c4 e6 16.c3 h6
17.h3?!

Better was 17.cxd4 hxg5 18.♖b5 gxf4 19.♗xf4 ♖b4 with a small advantage for Black.

17...♘f3+ 18.♔f2 ♘d2 19.♙e2 ♘c5
20.♔e3 ♙f8 21.b4



Now it gets interesting. How can Black save his hanging knights?

21...♘de4!

A nice concept!

22. ♖b1 f5 23. gxf5 gxf5 24. ♙a3 ♜a4
25. ♙f3 b5 26. ♙c1 ♜b6 27. ♚e2

With White still undeveloped, it's no wonder Black has a winning combination now.

27...♗xc3+ 28.♗xc3 ♕xf3+ 29.♗xf3
 ♔d3+ 30.♗g2 ♔xc3 31.a3 ♕d5
 32.♕f2 c5 33.♗f1 c4 34.♗e2 ♔c2+
 35.♗f3 ♔c3+ 36.♗e2 ♔c2+ 37.♗f3
 ♕e7 0-1

Conclusion: 1...♠h6 offers good chances for equality or even more after 1.f4. It's especially good against players who want to play 2.b3. If you know your opponent will play 2.♠f3 and 3.g3, you can play 1...♠h6 anyway for its shock value. However, it will probably lead to normal variations though.

CHAPTER 12

Glenn Flear

The Semi-Slav with 6.a3



A simple idea with some bite

The problem when meeting the Semi-Slav is that Black's opening is not at all bad and there is just so much theory.

So I suggest a positional weapon with white that steers the game away from the main lines and into positions where Black has to make the difficult decisions early on.

After the standard moves 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.f3 f6 4.c3 e6 5.e3 b7 I'm proposing 6.a3!

White intends the space-gaining b2-b4. A simple idea but one with some bite.

This has been played as a surprise weapon by the likes of Tony Miles and Kiril Georgiev. I have to admit that I have a flattering 5/5 with this move, although the idea isn't that good!

Most players now reply with

6...d6

In Game 1, I examine 6...g6 and 6...b6!?

7.b4 0-0 8.dxb2



8...♖e7

I wouldn't recommend 8...e5?! 9.cxd5 exd4, as 10.♖xd4! would leave Black with insufficient compensation for the pawn.

Instead, 10.♗xd4?! cxd5 11.♗e2 ♖b6 12.0-0 ♗e8 13.♗f3 a6 14.♖d4 (the right square but after losing two tempi(!) there is no advantage!) 14...♗g4 15.♗ac1 was about equal in Eslon-Flear, Palma de Mallorca 1991.

For 8...dxc4 9.♗xc4 b5 (9...e5, as in Flear-Meynard, Saint Affrique 2002, features in Game 3) 10.♗d3 a5, Flear-Fontaine, Saint Affrique 1999, see Game 2, and finally 8...♗e4 9.♗xe4 dxe4 10.♗d2 f5 11.♖b3 was played in Flear-Pelletier (Game 4) and Flear-Doornbos (Game 5), both French Team Championship 1999/00.

9.♖c2 e5

I consider this to be more accurate than 9...dxc4 10.♗xc4 e5. Another sensible move is 9...♗e8 intending a later ...e5, see the notes to Game 6.

10.cxd5 cxd5

Definitely better than 10...e4? 11.dxc6, when White wins a pawn, and probably superior to 10...♗xd5 11.♗xd5 cxd5 12.dxe5 ♗xe5 13.♗e2 when White keeps a pull.

11.dxe5

Another idea is 11.♗b5 e4, see the notes to Game 6.

11...♗xe5 12.♗b5

The more solid 12.♗d4 has been suggested.

12...♗xf3+ 13.gxf3 ♗e5 14.♗xe5

Otherwise 14.♗d4 a5 15.b5 ♗d7 proved to be unclear, see the notes to Game 6.

14...♖xe5

And as Agrest-Serper, Oberwart 1994, (which continued with 15.♗d4, see Game 6) turned out in Black's favour I instead suggest

15.♗d1!

when I think White has chances to retain an edge.

**Black avoids 6...♗d6****Game 1**

□ Glenn Flear

■ Fabian Lipinsky

Tunis 1999

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♗c3 ♗f6 4.e3 e6
5.♗f3 ♗bd7 6.a3 b6!?**

The other fianchetto 6...g6 is similar to the Schlechter System, a solid but passive hybrid between the Slav and the Grünfeld. The following example is slightly better for White: 7.♗d3 ♗g7 8.0-0 0-0 9.♗e1! ♖c7 10.♖c2 dxc4 11.♗xc4 e5 12.♗a2 exd4 13.exd4 ♗b6 14.♗g5 ♗f5 15.♖d2 J.Petronic-Djuric, Vrnjacka Banja 1998.

7.cxd5

As Black is unlikely to play in Meran-style with ...dxc4 and ...b5 there is a good case for 7.♗d3 e.g. 7...♗d6 and now:

– White could try 8.e4!?, when the addition of the extra moves a2-a3 by White and ...b7-b6 by Black (compared to a common position from the Semi-Slav) doesn't allow any ...♗b4+ ideas. However 8...dxe4 9.♗xe4 ♗xe4 10.♗xe4 ♗b7 11.0-0 ♖c7 12.♖e2 0-0 would give Black good chances for equality with ...♗f6 and ...c5 in the air. The move ...b6 also proving useful.

– 8.0-0-0 9.b4 is perhaps most in the spirit of the 6.a3 variation.

7...exd5



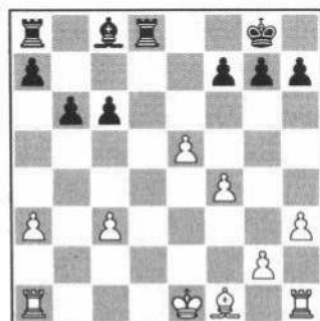
8.♖e5?

Far too wild. Instead, simply 8.♖d3 ♖d6 9.0-0 0-0 10.b4 is correct, with play akin to some variations of the Nimzo-Indian. White has the slightly better pawn structure but will still have to find a solution to the development of his dark-squared bishop.

8...♖xe5 9.dxe5 ♖g4 10.f4 ♖c5 11.♞f3 0-0 12.h3 ♖xe3

Alternatively, 12...♖h6 13.b4 (of course justifying 6.a3!) 13...♖e7 14.♖b2 is murky, but White should be fine.

13.♖xe3 ♖xe3 14.♞xe3 d4 15.♞d3 dxc3 16.♞xd8 ♖xd8 17.bxc3



A relief, White has just about equalized!

17...♖f5 18.g3! ♖d5 19.c4 ♖d4 20.♖d1 ♖ad8 21.♞xd4 ♖xd4 22.♞h2 ♖e4+ 23.♖d2 g5 24.fxg5 ♖xe5 25.♖e2 ♖a5

Instead, the exchange of rooks would be drawish.

26.♖e3 ♖g7 27.h4 ♖e6 28.♖e2 ♖a4 29.♖c3 a6 30.♖f3 ♖a5 31.c5!

31.♖xc6 is met by 31...♖c5.

31...bxc5!?

Instead, 31...♖xc5 would still be fairly balanced.

32.♖xc6



32...c4?

Ceding the d4-square to White's king is a positional mistake. Instead, activating his king with 32...f6! 33.gxf6+ ♖xf6 should still be fine for Black.

33.♖e3 ♖c5 34.♖b7 a5 35.♖d4 ♖c7 36.♖a6

The c-pawn is now fatally weak.

36...♖d7+ 37.♖c5 ♖d5+ 38.♖b6 ♖e5 39.♖xc4

Also possible is the attempt to win a tempo with 39.a4.

39...♖xc4 40.♖xc4 ♖e3 41.a4 ♖e5 42.♖c5 ♖e3 43.♖xa5 ♖xg3 44.♖c4 h6 45.gxh6+ ♖xh6 46.♖b5 f5 47.a5 ♖g8 48.a6 ♖f8 49.a7 f4 50.♖xf4 ♖xf4 51.a8 ♖ ♖xh4 52.♖g2

52.♖c5! would have been more precise. Nevertheless White won on move 84.

Black plays on the queenside

Game 2

□ Glenn Flear
 ■ Robert Fontaine
 Saint Affrique 1999

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♖c3 ♘f6 4.e3 e6
 5.♗f3 ♗bd7 6.a3 ♕d6 7.b4 0-0 8.♗b2
 dxc4

Trying to punish White's opening by forcing means, but it's generally a slight concession to allow the bishop to c4 in one move.

9.♗xc4 b5 10.♕d3 a5 11.bxa5 ♖xa5
 12.0-0 ♖e7

White is saddled with an isolated a-pawn but can Black really afford the time and effort to snatch it?

13.♞c2



13...♗xa3?!

The best move is probably 13...♗b7! against which White has a wide choice. My preference is for 14.♗e4! (not 14.e4?! e5 15.dxc5 ♗xe5 16.♗xc5 ♞xe5 17.f4 ♞h5 as Black's play against White's king is too dangerous) 14...♗xe4 (14...♗xa3? is dubious because of 15.♗c5! winning material) 15.♗xe4 ♗f6 (after 15...f5 16.♗xc6 ♞c8 White should keep some advantage after 17.d5! exd5 18.♗xd5+!, rather than 17.♞d2?! ♗xc6

18.♞xa5 ♗xf3 19.gxf3 ♞g5+ 20.♗h1 ♞h5 as Black then has at least a draw) 16.♗xc6! (this is still the right decision. I'm not keen on 16.♗d3?! ♗xa3 – 16...c5 17.dxc5 ♗xc5 18.♗xf6 gxf6 19.♗xh7+ ♗g7 20.♗e4 ♗xa3 is playable but the text is the serious test – 17.e4 h6! – better than 17...♗b4?! 18.♞xa5 ♗xa5 19.e5 ♗d5 20.♗xh7+ regaining the pawn with the better chances as Black's king is weak – as I don't believe that White has enough compensation for the pawn) 16...♞c7 (following 16...♞c8 White escapes the pin with 17.♞d2) 17.♞fc1 ♞c8 18.♗e5! and White retains the advantage e.g. 18...♗xc6 19.♗xc6 ♞aa8 20.g3 ♗d5 21.e4, 14.♗b1!

Regaining the pawn in favourable circumstances.

14...♗b4

Even worse is 14...b4? due to 15.♗xa3 bxa3 16.♞c3.

15.♞xc6 ♖xa1 16.♗xa1 ♗b8



17.♞c2

Avoiding 17.♞xb5?? ♗a6.

Black has an isolated pawn which will require defending and White has the more harmonious development. The fact that the b-pawn is actually passed is not significant as its advance can easily be curbed by White.

17...♗a6 18.♞c1 ♕d6 19.♞e2 ♞b7 20.♗bd2 b4 21.♗b2 ♞c8 22.♞xc8+

It's also possible to try and keep some pressure in the middlegame with 22.♘c4!?

22...♙xc8 23.♙xa6 ♗xa6 24.♗xa6 ♘xa6



My opponent offered a draw but White is clearly better due to the superior king and Black's b4-pawn which is frankly more isolated than it is passed!

25.♙f1! ♘d5 26.♙e2 ♘b6 27.♘d3 ♘c7 28.♘c4

Clearing the passage for White's dominant monarch.

28...♘xc4 29.♙xc4 f5 30.h3

It's only a question of time before the b-pawn falls.

30...h6 31.♙c1 ♙f7 32.♙d2 ♘d5 33.♙e1 g5 34.♘d3 h5 35.♙xb4 ♘xb4 36.♙xb4 g4 37.♘d3 ♙e7 38.f3 gxf3 39.gxf3 h4 40.♙e5 ♙f6 41.f4 ♙e7 42.♙f3 ♙f7 43.d5 exd5+ 44.♙xd5 ♙g6 45.♙e6 1-0

Black combines ...e5 with queenside play

Game 3

□ Glenn Flear
■ Thibault Meynard

Saint Affrique 2002

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘c3 ♙f6 4.e3 e6

5.♙f3 ♙bd7 6.a3 ♙d6 7.b4 0-0 8.♙b2 dxc4 9.♙xc4 e5 10.♙b3

Miles chose 10.♙a2!? in this position. The bishop might be slightly less exposed there. Then after 10...♙e7 11.♗c2 exd4 12.♘xd4, I'm not sure that many would want to control the f5-square with 12...g6!? as this is potentially self-weakening. Instead after 12...♙e5 13.h3 ♙e8 14.0-0 ♘g6 15.♙f5 ♙xf5 16.♗xf5 ♙e5 17.♗xe5 ♘xe5 18.♙ad1, Miles-Grzesik, Bundesliga 1984/85, White had the advantage of the bishop pair.

10...♙e7 11.♗c2 exd4 12.♘xd4



12...♙e5

I can't see anything concrete against 12...g6 despite the fact that it's an ugly-looking move. Weaknesses may appear on the kingside in the longer-term and Black may regret not having the g6-square available for his knight, e.g. 13.0-0 ♙e5 14.h3 ♙e8 15.♙ael threatening f2-f4 followed by e3-e4.

13.♙f5?!

This is premature. In an analogous position Miles preferred 13.h3 ♙e8 14.0-0 ♘g6 and only now ventured 15.♙f5, see the note to move 10.

13...♙xf5 14.♗xf5 b5

Better is 14...♙fd8, threatening ...♘d3, and if 15.♙d1 then 15...a5 is awkward.

15.0-0 a5

Another player is tempted by White's queenside, but White has the bishop pair as compensation for any problems over there.
16. ♖ac1 axb4 17. axb4



17... ♖g6?!

Although 17... ♖xb4 18. ♖xb5 yields White an edge, possible is the introductory 17...g6! 18. ♖b1, and only now 18... ♖xb4, when after 19. ♖e4 ♖xe4 20. ♖xe4 ♖d6 21. ♖fd1 ♖fe8 22. ♖xe5 a draw would be the most likely result.

18. ♖e2 ♖ac8 19. ♖d4

The c6-square suddenly proves to be a serious weakness.

19... ♖e4

A more robust defence is 19... ♖e5! but after 20. ♖fd1 White keeps up the pressure, noting that 20... ♖xb4? gets into hot water after 21. ♖xf7+!

20. ♖xe4 ♖xe4 21. ♖fd1 ♖xb4 22. ♖xc6 ♖d2?

After 22... ♖c3 23. ♖xc3 ♖xc6 24. ♖b4 ♖xc1 25. ♖xc1 White is much better but Black would have drawing chances.

23. ♖c2 b4

Now 23... ♖c3 loses the exchange after 24. ♖xc3 ♖xc6 25. ♖b4 ♖xc2 26. ♖xc2.

24. ♖d5 b3 25. ♖c4 ♖d6 26. ♖a4 ♖xe3 27. fxe3 ♖fe8 28. ♖d3 ♖e7 29. ♖xe7+ ♖xe7 30. ♖xb3 ♖d7 31. e4

And Black resigned.

Black plays with 8... ♖e4

Game 4

□ Glenn Flear

■ Yannick Pelletier

France tt 1999/00

1. d4 d5 2. c4 c6 3. ♖c3 ♖f6 4. e3 e6 5. ♖f3 ♖bd7 6. a3 ♖d6 7. b4 0-0 8. ♖b2 ♖e4!?

In this position White has no choice but to continue with

9. ♖xe4 dxe4 10. ♖d2 f5 11. ♖b3

White has a preponderance on the queenside but this is partially balanced out by Black having more space on the right-hand side of the board.



11... ♖e7

After 11... ♖f6 12. f4 exf3 13. gxf3 a5 14. 0-0 axb4 15. axb4 b5 16. c5 ♖b8 17. ♖d3, Malaniuk-Ortega, Formia 1995, White's space advantage enabled him to keep the better chances.

I employed Malaniuk's idea of playing an early f2-f4 a few months later in Game 5 in an analogous position.

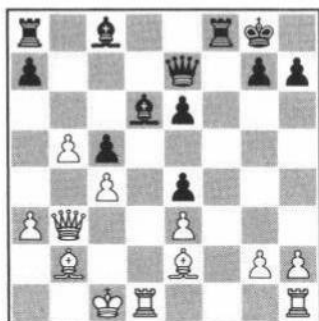
12. 0-0 ♖f6 13. ♖e2 b6

I quite like the idea of 13... ♖h8 intending ...e5, see Flear-Doornbos, Game 5.

14. f3 c5

Pelletier decides not to exchange on f3, but he ends up with the inferior pawn structure.

15.dxc5 bxc5 16.fxex4 ex4 17.exex4 fxe4 18.b5!



The queenside is closed off to any potential Black attack, but at the cost of allowing Black to penetrate with his rook. Is this important?

18...f2 19.f2 d2 b7

Although 19...fxg2 is tempting, White then keeps the advantage: 20.♖c2! (20.f2 h4 21.♖c2 can be adequately met by 21...h4) 20...b7 21.f2 h4 22.d8 (if 21...c7?? then 22.f2 d7) 22.e5! fxe2 23.fxd6 fxd2 24.fxe7 fxd1+ 25.♖xd1 fxd1+ 26.fxd1 and White has the better chances in the opposite-coloured bishop ending.

20.♖d1! f2 d8 21.e5 c7 22.fxd8+ ♗xd8

After 22...f2 d8 23.f2 f1, Black doesn't have time to take the g-pawn as 23...fxg2?? loses to 24.f2 d6.

23.♖xd8+ f2 d8 24.f2 d1 b6 25.f2! f2 26.fxf7 fxf7

Black's invasion is repulsed (just!) by the forcing of mass exchanges. Now the double-bishop ending proves to be better for White as he retains the better pawn structure (the 3 v 2 queenside majority being more use than Black's 2 v 1 on the e-file!).



27.f2 d1 g6 28.f2 e7 29.f2 a5 30.f2 h5 31.h4 a6 32.a4 f2 33.g4

White needs to eventually invade with his king if he is to hope to convert his advantage. The text move has this in mind but first the scope of the light-squared bishop has to be improved.

33...hxg4 34.f2xg4 a5 35.f2h3 f2d7 36.f2f4 f2e7 37.f2c7 f2d7 38.f2b6 f2d6 39.f2g2



39...e5?!

This soon loses a pawn to Zugzwang but I doubt that Black can save this ending anyway:

- 39...f2b4 40.f2g3 f2d2 41.f2f4 e5+ 42.f2g5 f2xe3+ 43.f2xg6 f2d2 44.f2f1! e3 45.f2c2 f2e4+ 46.f2f7 f2c2 47.f2a7 f2c7 48.h5 f2xa4 49.h6 f2c2 50.f2xc5 etc.
- 39...f2a8 40.f2g3 e5 41.f2g4 f2xe3

42. ♖xa5 ♜b7 43. ♖g3! (not 43. ♖e1?? ♜f4 and the threat of mate would embarrass White's king) 43... ♜f4+ 44. ♖f2 e3+ 45. ♖f1 e2+ 46. ♖f2 ♜c3+ 47. ♖xe3 ♜xg2 48. ♖xe2 ♜e4 49. ♖d2 and the connected passed pawns lead to victory despite the opposite bishops: 49... ♖d7 50. ♜b6 ♖d6 51. ♜d8 ♜f3 52. ♜g5 ♖c7 53. a5 ♜g2 54. ♜e3 ♖d6 55. a6 and then b5-b6-b7 etc.

40. ♖e2 ♜b4 41. ♖f2 ♜c3 42. ♜a7 ♜b2 43. ♜b8+ ♖e7 44. ♜c7 ♜c3 45. ♜h3 Zugzwang!

45... ♜b4 46. ♜xe5 ♜d2 47. ♖e2 ♜b4 48. ♜b2 ♖d6 49. ♜f6 ♜a3 50. ♖f2 ♜b4 51. ♖g3 1-0

Game 5

□ Glenn Flear
 ■ Yann Doornbos
 French It 1999/00

1. d4 d5 2. c4 c6 3. ♖c3 ♖f6 4. e3 e6
 5. ♖f3 ♖bd7 6. a3 ♜d6 7. b4 0-0 8. ♜b2
 ♜e4!? 9. ♖xe4 dxe4 10. ♖d2 f5
 11. ♜b3



11... ♜h8!

This move enables Black to safely play ...e5 challenging White's space advantage.

12. 0-0-0 ♜e7 13. f4 exf3 14. gxf3 e5
 The position remains rich and full of possi-

bilities. Black's bishop on c8 being a slight concern for him.

15. ♜d3 a5 16. c5 ♜c7



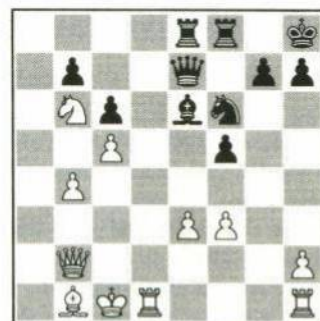
17. ♜b1?

Misplacing the bishop whilst allowing the opening of the a-file just helps Black! Instead the space-gaining idea 17. b5!? is possible when after 17... cxb5 (or 17... ♖f6 18. b6) 18. ♜xb5 White's pieces are the most dynamic.

17... axb4 18. axb4 ♖f6

Now ...♜e6 is coming when Black will obtain a fully mobilised game.

19. dxe5 ♜xe5 20. ♖c4 ♜xb2+ 21. ♜xb2
 ♜e6 22. ♖b6 ♜ae8



With Black's pieces well-placed in the centre and White's king rather shaky, Black already has to be better.

23. ♖he1 ♖d5

Also promising is 23...♗d5 24.♗c4 b6!.

24. ♖xf5 ♖xf3 25. ♖d6 ♖d5 26. ♗xd5 ♖xd5 27. ♖b1 ♖g5

Opening lines on the queenside with 27...b6! is also good.

28. ♖d2 ♖h4 29. ♖d7 ♖f7 30. ♖xf7 ♖xf7 31. e4 ♖d8 32. ♖e3 ♖xh2

The only way for White to now obtain compensation for the pawn is to create some mischief arising from the presence of a passed e-pawn.

33. e5 ♖e8 34. ♖f5 ♖h4 35. ♖e4**35... ♖xe4?!**

Black would retain more winning chances by keeping the queens on (White's king is the most vulnerable in a middlegame, but the more active in an ending), e.g. 35...♖g5+ 36.♗c2 h5 with a clearer advantage than in the game.

36. ♖xe4 ♖d5 37. ♖e3 ♖g6 38. ♖d7 ♖e7 39. ♖c8 ♖e6 40. ♖xe6 ♖xe6 41. ♖d2 ♖g7 42. ♖d3 ♖g5?!

A better practical chance to keep some advantage is 42...♖e8 43.♗e4 ♖f7, but White can still mix it with 44.b5!?

43. ♖e4 ♖g6 44. ♖f5! ♖f7 45. ♖h3 ♖g7 46. b5! cxb5 47. ♖b3 ♖e7 48. ♖xb5 ♖f7+ 49. ♖xg5 ♖e6 50. ♖b6+ ♖d5?

Pushing too hard for a win. With more time my opponent would have come to his senses

and played 50...♗xe5, when 51.c6 bxc6 52.♖xc6 would draw.

51. e6 ♖c7 52. ♖f6 ♖xc5 53. ♖b1 1-0

Black reacts with an early ...e5.

Game 6

□ Evgeny Agrest

■ Grigory Serper

Oberwart 1994

1. d4 d5 2. c4 c6 3. ♖c3 ♖f6 4. e3 e6 5. ♖f3 ♖bd7 6. a3 ♖d6 7. b4 0-0 8. ♖b2 ♖e7 9. ♖c2 e5!

In my opinion the most convincing defence for Black.

Delaying this advance is possible: 9...♖e8 10.h3!? (10.♖e2 is perhaps more natural but the text is a useful waiting move. A number of openings feature an early h2-h3, or a2-a3 and even some good ones feature both!) 10...a6 (after 10...e5 11.cxd5 e4?! – Black should settle for 11...cxd5 with play similar to what follows in the main game – 12.dxc6 and Black didn't obtain enough for the pawn in Tyomkin-Boudre, Toulouse 1997) 11.c5 (11.♖d3!? dxc4 12.♖xc4 b5 13.♖d3 a5 14.bxa5 ♖xa5 should be compared to Flear-Fontaine, Game 2) 11...♖c7 12.♖d3 e5 13.dxe5 ♖xe5 14.♖xe5 ♖xe5 15.0-0 ♖c7

(threatening ...♖e5) 16.♚ae1 ♖e4 17.f4 f5 18.♙xe4 dxe4 19.♗e2 ♙e6 20.♖d4 was the continuation of Tisdall-Skembris, Gausdal 1993, when after 20...♗f7! chances would be balanced.

10.cxd5 cxd5

After 10...e4?! 11.dxc6! exf3 12.cxd7 fxg2 13.♙xg2 ♙xd7, White had an extra pawn in Ki.Georgiev-Lukacs, Stara Zagora Zonal 1990. Then either 14.e4 or 14.0-0 would have been prudent, whereas the game continuation 14.♙xb7!? ♚ab8 15.♙f3 ♚fc8 16.♗d3 ♙e6 gave Black some practical chances for his pawns.

The remaining option is 10...♖xd5 which despite enabling White to obtain the slightly better pawn structure after 11.♖xd5 cxd5 12.dxe5 ♖xe5 13.♙e2, it should be mentioned that these type of isolated pawn positions only give a small pull for White. Chepukaitis-Ofstad, Bad Zwischenahn 2003, continued with the further moves 13...♖xf3+ 14.♙xf3 ♙e6 15.♗c3 ♗g5 16.0-0 ♚ac8 17.♗d2 ♚c4 and Black had sufficient activity to enable him to hold.

11.dxe5

Seeking the bishop pair with 11.♖b5 seems somewhat slow, e.g. 11...e4 12.♖d2 ♖b6 13.♙e2?! (if 13.♖xd6 ♗xd6 then 14.♚c1! with chances for both sides is best, rather than 14.a4?! ♙e6 15.♗c5 ♗d8 16.♗a5, as in that case Black can obtain strong counterplay with 16...♖g4!?) 13...♙g4 14.♖xd6 ♗xd6 15.f3 ♚ac8 16.♗b3 exf3 17.gxf3 ♙f5 18.b5 ♙c2 and Black was better in Ki.Georgiev-Markus, Bar 2003.

11...♖xe5 12.♖b5!

Although the natural 12.♖d4 (keeping the kingside intact) seems reasonable enough, White has a hole on c4 (compared to some analogous IQP positions with the pawn on b3 and bishop on b2), so I doubt that he will be able to claim anything more than a nominal advantage.

12...♖xf3+ 13.gxf3

Now White's king insecurity is an issue, but so is his control over some key central squares.

13...♙e5



14.♙xe5

Also rather unclear was the following: 14.♖d4 a5 15.b5 ♙d7 16.♙d3 ♚fc8 17.♗e2 ♚e8 (Black's active pieces more or less compensate for his isolani) 18.h4 ♖h5 19.♗f1 ♗f6 20.♗d1 g6 21.♙e2, Dao Thien Hai-Prié, Budapest 1993, and White has re-organized his pieces ready for a timely f3-f4.

14...♗xe5 15.♖d4?!

This obvious move is the source of White's difficulties. Instead White should keep his control of the c7-square and so I suggest 15.♚d1! ♗h5 (White has an adequate control of events in the complications following 15...♙d7 16.♗c7 ♗h5 17.♖d4) 16.♖d4 ♙h3 17.♙xh3 (or even 17.♗c7 ♙xf1 18.♗xf1 with chances for both sides) 17...♙xh3 18.♗f5 ♙h4 19.0-0 and White may even be better.

15...♙e8 16.♙e2

I also prefer Black after 16.♗d2 ♙d7 17.♚c1 ♚ac8 18.♚xc8 ♚xc8 19.h4 ♖h5.

16...♙h3 17.♖d2!?

A radical solution for the king!

17...♚ac8 18.♗b1

**18...a5!?**

Greedy but good is 18...g2!? 19. g1 xh2 20. f5 h6!.

19. bxa5 g2 20. c1 xc1 21. xc1 xc1 22. b1 xh2

The game has become very sharp, but in these cases White's inferior king is a constant worry for him.

23. b7 xf2 24. b3 c8 25. e1 h2

Black should not exchange queens.

26. d1 d7 27. b4 h5 An exciting race follows. 28. a6 h4 29. a7 h3 30. d2 g1 31. c3 h2 32. b8 h1 33. xe8+ xe8

Agrest was understandably even more concerned about 33...xe8 34. a8 c4+ 35. fxe4 e1+ 36. c2 b1+ 37. d2 h1 mate.

34. a8



Material is equal but the chances of survival of the two kings is not!

34...b1 35. c2 h1+ 36. d3 b5+!

Winning a piece.

37. b5 xc2+ 38. dxc2 xe2+ 39. c3 xb5 40. a4 c4+ 41. d2 b4+ 42. e2 f8 43. a5 b5+ 44. f2 e7 45. a7+ d8 46. a8+ d7 47. a6 c6 0-1

The Epishin Attack

A somewhat more aggressive interpretation is illustrated by the following game.

Game 7

□ Tiger Hillarp Persson

■ Erwin L'Ami

Malmö 2007

1. d4 d5 2. c4 c6 3. f3 f6 4. e3 e6 5. c3 bd7 6. a3 d6 7. g4!



In 2006, Epishin introduced a hybrid system combining 6.a3 with the thrust g2-g4 which is most often associated with 6. c2 d6 7. g4.

The advantage of this set-up is that Black is not able to resort to a defence based on ...b4, but on the other hand he has an easier time playing his knight to e4 early in the

game. White has made one less developing move so there is a compelling case for Black to open up the game.

7...e5!

L'Ami correctly hits back in the centre. Well let's face it, if White intends fiddling about on the wings then this just has to be the way to react!

The initial game in this system saw Black reacting passively with 7...b6?! 8.g5 ♖g8, when White was able to gain the initiative: 9.cxd5 exd5 10.e4 ♖e7 11.exd5 cxd5 12.♔d3 0-0 13.♗c2 g6 14.h4 ♔e8 15.h5 Epishin-Godena, San Marino 2006.

More recently Kobalia was more successful with the prophylactic 7...h6 e.g. 8.♔g1 dxc4 9.♔xc4 b5 10.♔e2 b4 11.axb4 ♔xb4 12.h4 c5 13.♖f1 ♔b7 14.g5 hxg5 15.hxg5 ♔e4 16.♔xe4 ♔xe4 17.♔d2, Epishin-Kobalia, Dresden 2007 with a balanced game.

8.g5

After 8.cxd5 ♔xd5 9.♔xd5 cxd5 10.dxe5 ♔xe5 11.♔xe5 ♔xe5 12.♔g2 ♔e6 White's pawn on g4 is misplaced.



8...♔e4 9.cxd5 ♔xc3 10.bxc3 cxd5 11.♗b3 ♗c7 12.a4 0-0 13.h4

With his centre reasonably solid White aims to expand his influence on both wings. A curious plan but not one that should worry the second player.

13...♔b6 14.♔a3 ♔xa3 15.♗xa3 e4

16.a5

After the more solid 16.♔d2, with 16...♔d7!? Black obtains a queenside initiative.

16...exf3 17.axb6



17...axb6!?

Surely after 17...♗xb6! White can't have enough for his pawn e.g. 18.♔d3 ♔g4 19.♔d2 (or 19.h5 ♗e6 20.g6 h6) 19...♔fc8 20.♔ab1 ♗c6 21.♔b5 ♔f5 22.♔c5 ♗e6 and Black is clearly better.

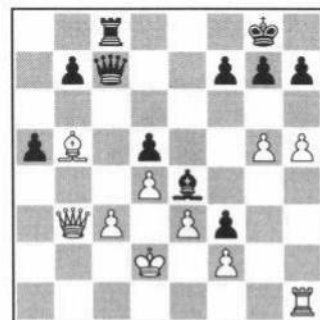
18.♗b2

18.♗xa8? gets into hot water after 18...♗xc3+ 19.♔d1 ♔f5!.

18...♔f5 19.♔d2 ♔a5 20.♔xa5 bxa5 21.♔b5

In this way the black queenside is stymied.

21...♔c8 22.♗b3 ♔e4 23.h5!?



Black may have an extra pawn but if he's going nowhere on the queenside then he will

have problems converting any advantage. Furthermore, this kingside advance will give him additional things to think about.

23...♖d6 24.♞h4 h6!? 25.g6 f5 26.♞f4 ♜c7 27.♙f1 ♜c6 28.♙b5 ♜e6 29.♙f1 b6

Spurning the draw. The following move is based on good chess psychology.



30.♙d3!

If Black wants to play for a win he naturally feels that he should 'do something'. So Tiger offers his opponent the opportunity to capture on d3, but this then gives both players winning chances.

30...♙xd3 31.♙xd3 ♜f8 32.♞xf3!

Rather cheeky, but why not?

32...♙e7

Alternatively, 32...♜e4+ yields nothing after 33.♙e2.

33.♞f4 ♜f6 34.♙e2 ♜g5?

Manly (foolhardy?), but fraught with danger.

35.♜b1! ♜f6 36.♜h1!

Chasing the black king away.

36...♙e7 37.♜h4+ ♜f6 38.♜h3 ♙e6 39.e4!

Black's king is the weaker. This is often the decisive factor in late-middlegames with only a queen and rook each.

39...dxe4 40.♞xe4+ ♙d6 41.♞e5 ♜g5?!

A better chance was 41...♞e7 42.f4 ♙c7, as it doesn't lose a pawn, although White's central domination would be unpleasant to face.

42.♞xf5 ♜g1 43.♞e5 ♞d7 44.♞e6+ ♙c7 45.♜f3 **1-0**

Black's king is just too open.

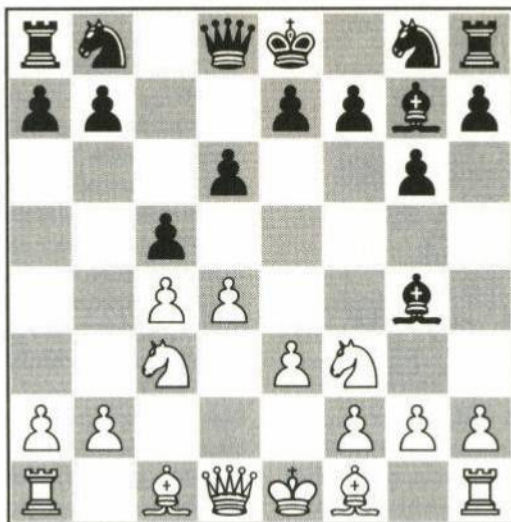
I don't think that the Epishin Attack is very convincing after L'Ami's 7...e5 and I personally would recommend sticking to 7.b4.

Conclusion: I doubt that 6.a3 is the best move in the position but it's not a bad surprise weapon.

CHAPTER 13

Alexander Finkel

Modern for Advanced Players



Develop your bishops first

I've been playing the variation which I'd like to introduce to you for many years. My score against 2300-2600 players is something between 70% to 80%. Taking into account these amazing statistics and adding to it that I can hardly call myself a very strong player, the most natural conclusion is that this line is probably not such a bad one.

I have to say that the variation which I chose to cover in this article is quite rarely played as most Modern Defence players confronted with the 1.d4 d6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♗g7 4.♕f3 move order prefer to switch to regular lines of the King's Indian by playing 4...♘f6, or they opt for 4...c5 (see Dorian Rogozenko's articles on 'An Indian SOS' in SOS-4). This

statement is equally correct for the following move order: 1.♕f3 g6 2.d4 ♗g7 3.c4 d6 4.♘c3 – eventually leading to an identical position.

White's point is to avoid typical Modern Defence lines with an early ...♘c6 and ...e5, however, by adopting this move order White exposes himself to an early 4...♗g4!?

The idea behind 4...♗g4 is to put immediate pressure on White's centre. Black takes full advantage of the position of the knight on g8 (I understand that my last statement sounds a bit unusual at best, but it's actually true) throwing in 5...c5 on the next move and developing the knight to f6 or f5 (via h6) depending on the circumstances.

The focus of our survey is the line arising after 1.♘f3 g6 2.d4 ♗g7 3.c4 d6 4.♙c3 ♗g4 5.e3 c5!?. Black's last move actually 'sets the tone' for the forthcoming play, although White has the last word in selecting the pawn structure and determining the character of the position.

Allow me to make my point by referring to White's main options on the 6th move: 6.♗e2 and 6.d5. After 6.♗e2 Black's plan involves piece play against white central pawns on d4 and c4, which is quite different from the Benoni-like positions arising after 6.d5, where Black usually wants to play ...e6 and ...exd5 followed by a pawn advance on the queenside. It is appropriate to mention that 6.♗e2 is way more popular than 6.d5!?. Personally, I'm not sure whether this preference is objectively justified.

By choosing this variation Black wants to fight for the initiative from the very first moves, forcing White to think on his own rather than to follow well-known theoretical patterns. That's what SOS is all about, isn't it?

□ Claude Landenbergue

■ Alexander Finkel

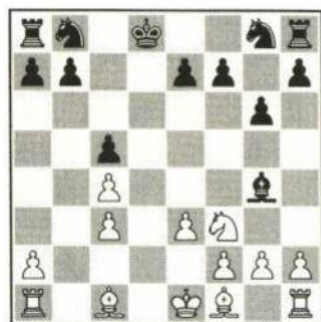
Budapest 1993

1.d4 g6 2.c4 ♗g7 3.♙f3 d6 4.♙c3 ♗g4 5.e3 c5 6.♗e2

White's main move, which is considered to be the most challenging one for Black. White isn't ready yet to release the pressure in the centre by pushing d5. For 6.d5 see Gausel-Jansa below.

Other moves are hardly dangerous for Black.

● The capture on c5 is just bad for White because after 6.dxc5?! ♗xc3+ 7.bxc3 dxc5 8.♗xd8+ ♗xd8 White is left with weaknesses on c3 and c4 and passive bishops:



– 9.♗e5 ♗e6 10.e4 ♙f6 11.♖b1 ♗xe4 12.♖xb7 ♗d6 13.♖b1 ♗d7 14.♗f4 ♗b6 15.♗e2 f6 16.♙d3 ♖c8 17.♗xd6 exd6 was somewhat better for Black in V. Mikhalevski-Davies, Rishon-le-Zion 1995.

– No better is 9.♗d2 ♙f6 10.a4 ♙c6 11.a5 ♙c7 12.♙b3 b6 13.f3 ♗d7 14.e4 ♖hb8 15.♗e2 e5 16.0-0 ♗e6 with a slight edge. Kraschl-Kozul, Oberwart 1995.

● More appealing for White is 6.♗a4+!? ♗d7 7.♗c2 ♙c6?! 8.d5 ♗a5 9.b3!? ♙f6 10.♗b2 0-0 11.♗e2 a6 12.0-0 ♖b8 13.♙d2 b5 14.e4 e6 15.♙d1 exd5 16.exd5 and White had a comfortable edge in Irzhanov-Kakageldyev, Ashkhabad 1996. The black knight is completely out of play on a5, while White's bishop is clearly better placed on e2 comparing to Yugoslav Variation of the KID in which Black is putting pressure on c4 by a similar manoeuvre.

On the seventh move Black should play 7...cxd4!? 8.exd4 ♗g4 with characteristic pressure on d4.

6...cxd4

It's too early for 6...♗h6?! as after 7.d5 the black knight is useless on h6.

7.exd4 ♗h6

Heading for f5.

8.0-0

This is natural, but I believe that White can pose Black more problems with 8.h3 (see the next game). Deserving of attention is the im-

mediate 8.d5!? 0-0 9.0-0 ♖d7 10.♗d2
Marin-Jansa, Warsaw Zonal 1987.



8...0-0

Keeping all options open. Also possible is 8...♗f5:

– 9.h3 ♗xf3 10.♗xf3 ♖c6 11.d5 (11.♗xc6+ bxc6 12.d5 cxd5 13.♗xd5 0-0 14.♖b1 e6 15.♗e3 ♗d4 was equal in Werbeck-Jansa, Eupen rapid 1994) 11...♗e5 12.♗d2 0-0 13.♗e2 ♖c8 14.b3 ♗b6 15.a4 a6 16.a5 ♗d4 unclear, Peelen-Hartoch, Wijk aan Zee 2001.

– 9.♗a4+?! ♗d7 10.♗xd7+ ♗xd7 11.♗d5 ♖c8 12.♗e1 e6 13.♗e3 ♗xf3 14.♗xf3 ♗xd4 15.♗xb7 ♖b8 with a plus for Black. Volkov-Gelman, Krasnoyarsk 1998.

– 9.d5!? ♗d7 10.♗d2 (White must protect the knight on c3 in order to play b3 later on) 10...0-0 11.b3 a6 12.a4 ♖c8 (12...♗c5 13.♖b1 e5 14.dxe6 fxe6 15.b4 ♗d7 16.♗g5 ♗xe2 17.♗xe2 ♖e8 18.♗b3± Ivkov-Magem Badals, Spain 1990) 13.♖a3 ♗c5 14.a5 b6 15.axb6 ♗xb6 with counterplay. Lukacs-Jo.Horvath, Hungary tt 1999/00.

9.♗b3?!

Not the best square for the queen, as after a future d5 Black will gain a tempo by ♗c5. Black played inaccurately in St.Pedersen-Berg, Forli 1991: 9.♗g5 ♗f5 10.♖c1 ♗d7 11.♗d2 ♗xf3?! 12.♗xf3 ♗xd4 13.♗xb7 ♖b8 14.♗d5±.

Black gains counterplay after 9.h3 ♗xf3 10.♗xf3 ♗c6 11.d5 ♗e5 12.♗e2 ♖c8 13.♗b3 ♗f5.

9...♗c8

Often in this line the black queen moves to c8 in order to protect his b7-pawn and attack the white one on c4.

10.d5 ♗f5



11.♗e4?!

White is struggling to find good squares for his pieces. Perhaps he should have protected his c4-pawn indirectly here with 11.♗e1!?, in order to meet 11...♗xf3 with 12.♗xf3 ♗d4 13.♗d1 ♗xf3+?! 14.♗xf3 ♗xc4 15.♗xe7 with a slight edge.

11...♗d7 12.♗g3 ♗c5 13.♗d1

Another inaccuracy, after which White is starting to experience serious problems. White's main concern is to develop his dark-squared bishop, which proves to be a very difficult task.

13.♗xf5 ♗xf5 (White is better after 13...♗xb3 14.♗xe7+ ♗h8 15.♗xc8 ♗xc1 – 15...♗xa1? 16.♗xd6± – 16.♖axc1 ♖axc8 17.b3 ♗xf3 18.♗xf3 ♖fe8) 14.♗d1 e6 15.h3 ♗xf3 16.♗xf3 ♖ad8 was still unclear.

13...♗g3 14.hxg3 ♖e8!

Black is ready to push e6, implementing one of the basic principles of middlegame play – once you have an advantage in development the most efficient way to exploit it is by opening up the position.

15. ♖h4

Also after 15. ♖e1 e6 16. dxe6 ♖xe6 17. ♖b1 ♗f5 18. ♖a1 ♖f6 it's pretty tough for White to move.

15... ♗xe2 16. ♖xe2 e5!

It's more important for Black to push ...e4 than to create a weakness on d5.

17. ♖f3

Black is better after 17. dxe6 ♖xe6 18. ♗e3 (or 18. ♖xe6 ♖xe6 19. ♖f3 ♖c8) 18... ♖a4 19. ♖ab1 ♖b6 20. b3 d5.

17... e4 18. ♖e1 ♖a4 19. ♖b1**19... b5!**

Black is willing to trade his b-pawn for a central pawn on d5, taking control over the centre.

20. cxb5 ♖c5 21. ♗f4

More persistent was 21. ♖c2! ♖xd5 22. ♖d1 ♖e6 (22... ♖xa2? 23. ♖a1 ♖b3 24. ♖a3+-) 23. a3 d5 24. ♖d4 ♖d7.

21... ♖ac8 22. ♖c1

Preferable was 22. a3!?

22... ♖xd5

Now material losses are inevitable for White.

23. ♖d1 ♖xa2 24. ♖xd6 ♖c3!

Winning two pawns with one move!

25. ♖e3 ♖xb5 26. ♖d2 ♖xb2 27. ♗g5

Black also wins after 27. ♖e2 ♖c3 28. ♖e3 f5 29. ♗g5 ♖d5 30. ♖e2 ♖b8.

27... ♖a3 28. ♖xa3 ♗xa3

With two sound pawns up the endgame

should be very easily winning for Black. Although I nearly managed to spoil it, I won on move 75.

□ Pia Cramling**■ Evgeny Agrest**

Gothenburg ch-SWE 2005

A very tense game which could have gone either way as both sides made quite a few inaccuracies in the middlegame. Overall it's quite typical for the and complicated struggle which is offered by this line.

1. d4 d6 2. ♖f3 g6 3. c4 ♗g7 4. ♖c3 ♗g4 5. e3 c5 6. ♗e2 cxd4

For those of you who are in for some 'extreme' stuff I recommend the weird looking 6... ♖c6!? 7. d5 ♗xf3 8. ♗xf3 ♗xc3+ 9. bxc3 ♖e5 10. ♗e2 f5 (Black's main strategic idea is to restrict the bishops, so preventing e4 is one of the main priorities) 11. ♖b1 ♖a5 12. ♖xb7 ♖xa2 13. e4 fxe4 14. 0-0 ♖f6 with very complex play, Barsov-Hennig, Breda 2000.

7. exd4

Black is doing just great after 7. ♖xd4 ♗xe2 8. ♖dx2 (8. ♖cxe2 ♖f6 9. 0-0-0 10. b3 ♖a6 11. ♗b2 d5 12. ♖c1 ♖c8= Stangl-K. Berg, Munich 1991/92) 8... ♖f6 and White must either push e4 later on, getting a position that is very similar to a Sicilian with 3. ♗b5+ but with a wasted tempo on e2-e3-e4, or allow ...d5 by going for an early b3. 9. 0-0-0 10. b3 ♖c6 11. ♗b2 ♖a5 12. ♖d2 a6 13. ♖fd1 ♖fc8 14. ♖d5 ♖xd5 15. cxd5 ♖xd2 16. ♖xd2 ♖e5 17. h3 ♖c7 ♖d7 Dobosz-Jansa, Würzburg 1989.

7... ♖h6

This move is more promising for Black than 7... ♖c6, transposing into a quite unpleasant line of the English Opening. After 7... ♖c6 White doesn't have to waste a tempo on playing h3, since after d5 Black would have to take on f3 anyway. These little improvements is what opening preparation is about.

The next two games illustrate that White is very comfortable placed after 7...♘c6?! 8.0-0 ♖h6 and now:

– either 9.d5 ♙xf3 10.♙xf3 ♘e5 11.♙e2 0-0 12.♖h1 ♛c8 13.b3 a6 14.♙d2 ♘f5 15.f4 ♘d7 16.♛c1 Lechtynsky-Davies, Osterskars 1995, or

– 9.♙d2 0-0 10.d5 ♙xf3 11.♙xf3 ♘e5 12.♙e2 ♘f5 13.♛e1 ♛c8 14.b3 a6 15.a4 ♖b6 16.♙f1 Cvitan-Hug, Lucerne 1997.

8.h3 ♙xf3 9.♙xf3 ♘c6



10.g4!?

An ambitious attempt to exploit the poor position of the knight on h6. On the negative side we should mention the slightly vulnerable pawn formation on the kingside – White's king might get a bit too exposed, to put it simple.

● After 10.d5 ♘e5 White must play accurately to retain a minimal edge:

– 11.♙e4?! ♛c8 12.0-0 ♘xc4 13.♖b3 ♘b6 14.♛e1 ♘g8 15.♖b5+ ♗d7 16.♖a5 ♘f6 R.Garcia-Giaccio, Buenos Aires 1990.

– 11.0-0 ♘f5 12.♙e4 ♛c8 13.g4 ♘d4 14.b3 f5 15.gxf5 gxf5 16.♙g2± Zoler-Hutters, Panormo 2001.

– 11.♙e2 ♘f5 12.♙d2 0-0 13.0-0 a6 14.♛c1 ♖b6 15.b3 ♗d4 16.♛c1 ♘d3 17.♙xd3 ♗xd3 18.a4 with a minor edge, but Black's position remains very solid. Portisch-Timman, Wijk aan Zee 1975.

● In case of 10.♙xh6 Black easily keeps good counterchances: 10...♙xh6 11.♖a4 (or 11.0-0-0 12.♛e1 ♙g7 13.♙xc6 bxc6 14.d5 ♛c8 15.♛c1 cxd5 16.♖xd5 e6 17.♖d3 ♖a5± Haimovich-Ree, Amsterdam 2001) 11...♗d7 12.♙d1 ♙g7 (12...0-0 13.0-0 ♙g7 14.♛f1 ♙fd8 15.♙xc6 bxc6 16.♛e3 d5∞ Cebalo-Hoi, Copenhagen 1991) 13.♙e2 0-0 14.b4 e6 15.0-0 d5 16.cxd5 exd5 with equality in Krivoshey-Naer, Polanica Zdroj 1999. **10...♙g8!?**

The knight has no prospects on h6, so it makes perfect sense to bring it to f6.

After the careless 10...0-0?! 11.♙e3 e5 12.♙xc6! bxc6? (it was necessary to jump into complications by 12...exd4) 13.dxe5 Black found himself in deep trouble as it's pretty difficult to protect the knight on h6 without giving up some material: 13...♛e8 (13...dxe5 14.♖c1+–) 14.♖d2 ♙xe5 15.0-0-0 ♙xc3 16.♖xe3± Bode-Alber, Schöneck 1991.

White retained a small edge after 10...♗d7 11.♙e3 f5 12.♗d2 f4 (12...fxg4 13.♙xc6 ♖xc6 14.d5 ♖xc4 15.♙xh6 ♙xc3 16.♖xc3 ♖e4+ 17.♘d2 ♗xd5+ 18.♗d3±) 13.♙xf4 ♘xd4 14.♙d5 ♘f7 15.♙e3 Wells-Conquest, European Championship, Istanbul 2003.

11.♙e3

It's too early for 11.♖a4?! ♙xd4 12.♙xc6+ bxc6 13.♖xc6+ ♘f8 and Black gets the upper hand.

11...♙f6



12. ♖f1

Once the pawn on d4 is protected 12. ♖a4 (this makes a lot more sense now than on the previous move) 12... ♗d7 13. g5 ♕h5 14. ♔d1 followed by 15. c5 looks like an interesting try to fight for an advantage.

Also possible was 12. 0-0.

12... 0-0 13. ♖g2 ♔c8 14. ♔c1 a6 15. ♗e2

White has the bishop pair and some space advantage while Black hopes to get at the opponent's king.

15... e5 16. dxe5 dxe5

**17. ♕d5?!**

It was clearly better to support an invasion to d5 by the preliminary 17. ♔hd1!? as the black queen doesn't have too many squares to retreat to: 17... ♕d4 (17... ♗e8 18. ♕c5 ♕d4 19. ♕xd4 exd4 20. ♔xd4±; 17... ♗e7 18. ♕d5±) 18. ♕xd4 exd4 19. ♕xb7 ♔e8 20. ♗f3 ♔xc4 21. ♕xa6±.

17... ♕d7!

All of a sudden Black is ready to play his trumps by pushing his f-pawn.

18. g5 ♕h8

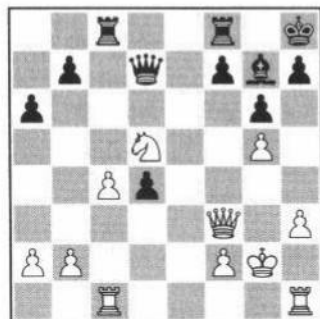
Useful prophylaxis. Not 18... f5?! 19. gxf6 ♕xf6 20. ♔hd1 e4 21. ♕xf6+ ♗xf6 22. ♕xc4±.

19. ♕g4

Another step in the wrong direction. After trading the bishops White's king becomes much more vulnerable.

19. h4!? f5 20. gxf6 ♕xf6 21. h5 gxh5 (21... e4

22. ♕g4 ♕xg4 23. ♗xg4±) 22. ♕xf6 ♕xf6 23. ♔xh5 ♔g8+ 24. ♕h1 was the way to go. **19... ♕d4 20. ♕xd4 exd4 21. ♕xd7 ♗xd7 22. ♗f3**

**22... ♔c6?!**

This move is too slow. More in the spirit of the position was 22... ♕d8!, after which White's best choice would be a transposition into an inferior rook endgame: 23. ♕f6 (23. h4 f6 24. ♗g3? ♔xc4!—) 23... ♕xf6 24. ♗xf6+ ♗xf6 25. gxf6 ♔c6 26. ♔hd1 ♔d8 27. ♔d3 ♔xf6 28. ♔cd1±. White should be able to hold the endgame without too many problems.

23. ♔he1 ♔e6 24. ♕f4 ♔d6 25. c5 ♔c6 Admitting that his previous moves were wrong. **26. ♗g4 26. ♗d5 ♗c7. 26... ♗d8** Playing with fire. **27. b4 ♔c7 28. ♔cd1 ♔d7 29. ♕d3 29. ♔d3!?. 29... ♔d5 30. h4 ♔f5 31. f4 f6 32. ♖g3 32. ♖g1. 32... h5?!**



Black is obsessed with the idea to attack, while he should be thinking about neutralizing White's initiative. **33.gxh6** **34.♖e6** Now the pawn on d4 is doomed. **34...♗h5** Or **34...♗e8** **35.♗de1** **36.♗xe6** **37.♗d5** **38.♗e7+** **39.♗f3**. **35.♗d6** **36.♗e8** **37.♗xg6??** Throwing away the game in one move. After the accurate **37.♗xd4** **38.♗d1** it would be very difficult for Black to survive. **37...♗g8** **38.♗d8** **39.♗xd3+! 0-1**

□ Einar Gausel

■ Vlastimil Jansa

Gausdal Troll Masters 1991

1.d4 d6 2.♗f3 g6 3.c4 ♗g7 4.♗c3 ♗g4 5.e3 c5 6.d5!?

By choosing this move White strives for typical KID/Benoni positions.



6...♗f6

The most flexible move. Alternatives are clearly worse, even though the idea of giving up the dark-squared bishop is quite interesting. Anyway, I would recommend to stick to **6...♗f6**, as it's not so easy for Black to keep the position closed.

– **6...e5?** **7.dxe6!** **♗xe6** **8.♗b5** **♗f6** **9.♗xd6** **♗xd6** **10.♗xd6+** **♗d7** **11.♗xb7** **♗a6** **12.a3** **♗ab8** **13.♗a5** **♗e4** **14.♗d3** **♗f5** **15.♗d2** **♗xd2**

16.♗xd2 **♗xb2** **17.♗b1** with a big edge in Ehlvest-A.Ivanov, New York 1989.

– **6...♗xc3+?! 7.bxc3** **♗a5** (**7...♗d7** **8.♗e2** **♗a5** **9.♗c2** **♗b6** **10.e4** **♗a4** **11.♗b3** ½-½ Sakaev-Gulko, Elista ol 1998) **8.♗d2** **♗f6** **9.♗b3** **0-0** **10.♗d3** **♗bd7** **11.h3** **♗f5?** **12.♗xf5** **gxh5** **13.0-0** **♗b6** **14.♗h4** White is better. Kargoll-Dischinger, Dresden 1998.

7.♗e2

Less convincing is **7.h3** **♗xf3** **8.♗xf3** (White's queen is badly placed on f3) **8...0-0** (or **8...♗a6** **9.♗d2** **♗c7** **10.g4!** **♗b8** **11.g5** **♗d7** **12.h4** **a6** **13.a4** **e6** **14.e4** unclear. Ostenstad-Bern, Vetre 1992) **9.♗d1!** **♗a6** **10.♗e2** **♗c7** **11.0-0** **a6** **12.♗b1** **b5** **13.b3** **♗b8** **14.♗c2** **e6** **15.dxe6** **fxe6** **16.e4** **b4** **17.♗d1** **e5** Guliev-Kakageldyev, Simferopol 1989. **7...0-0**



8.h3

Forcing Black to take on f3. After **8.0-0** **e5?! play** is most likely to transpose into an unfavourable kind of KID: **9.e4** (**9.dxe6** **♗xe6** **10.e4** **♗c6** **11.♗g5** **♗b6** **12.♗d2** **♗d4** **13.♗fd1** **♗g4?** **14.♗xd4** **♗xd4** **15.♗xg4** **♗xg4** **16.♗d5+-** Nielsen-Hoi, Tønder

1993) 9...d5 10.h3 dxc8 11.Ne1 d4 12.f1 d7 13.g3 d5 14.g2 a6 15.e3 h6 16.d2± Toth-Kluger, Budapest 1971. However, after 8.0-0 Black should play 8...a6 intending to take on f3 later on. For example: 9.e4 d7 10.f4 d7 11.h3 dxf3 12.xf3 e8 13.e2 d4 14.Wd2 with a minimal edge Komljenovic-Jansa, Bad Mergentheim 1989.

8...xf3 9.xf3 a6

As I mentioned, Black's plan in these kinds of positions is to push ...e6, take on d5 and start his actions on the queenside with ...b5 in case White recaptures on d5 with the c-pawn. The knight comes to c7 to support the future advance of the b pawn.

10.0-0 c7



11.b1?!

This move is just a waste of tempo. White is not in time to prepare the b4-break, which is one of White's alternative plans in the position.

For that reason it was better to stick to orthodox play involving e4 and f4: 11.e4 b8 12.e2 a6 13.a4 e6 14.f4 exd5 15.cxd5 e8 with about equal chances in a complex position.

11...b8

Black is ready for ...b5 so White has to take some measures against it.

12.e2 a6 13.a4 e5

I would have opted for 13...e6, keeping the option to take on d5.

14.dxe6

Black obtains interesting counterplay after 14.e4 d7 15.e3 f5 16.b4!? (16.exf5 gxf5 17.f4 e4) 16...f4 17.c1 cxb4 18.xb4 a5 19.b1 d5.

14...fxe6 15.e4

Weakening the crucial d4-square. A better way to deal with ...d5 is 15.b4!? cxb4 16.xb4 b6 (16...d7?! 17.e4 d5 18.cxd5 exd5 19.dg3±) 17.a3 intending to bring the rook to d2 via b2.

15...We7 16.e3 d7

On its way to d4.

17.f4



17...b8!

This is a multi-purpose move – Black takes care of d6 against a possible doubling of White's major pieces on the d-file and prepares the manoeuvre b8-c6-d4.

18.Wd2

Deserving of attention was 18.Wd3!?, to play 19.f5 in case of 18...b8.

18...b8 19.d3 c6 20.b1 d4! 21.xd4

21.f5 xxe3+ 22.Wxe3 d5 23.Wg3 Wg7.

21...xd4 22.e5?!

Preferable was 22.f5.

22...d5 23.cxd5 exd5

Or 23...d5 24.d4 b5 25.axb5 axb5.

24. ♖f2 ♜ce6 25. ♖g3 ♚h8



White's play on the kingside is easily neutralized, while it's pretty tough to deal with the advance of the black pawns on the queenside and in the centre.

26. ♜f2

White's pieces are cramped, so getting rid of one of them is an idea: 26. ♜e2! ♜c4 27. ♜xd4 ♜c5 28. ♜e3 ♜xd4 29. ♜b1 ♜b3 30. ♜xc5 ♜xc5 31. a5 ♜b3 32. g4.

26... ♜c4 27. ♜b1 ♜b5 28. axb5 axb5 29. f5?

Just making things easier for Black.

Instead 29. ♜g4 was better.

29... ♜xf5 30. ♜ef1 ♜4 31. ♜g4 ♜g8

Apparently Black was in some sort of a time scramble, as his play for the next 10-12 moves is not very convincing! After the simple 31... ♜f3! the game wouldn't have lasted for another 30 moves.

32. ♜h5 ♜g5 33. ♜h6 ♜g7 34. ♜h4 ♜b4

There was nothing wrong with 34... ♜f3 35. g4 ♜xe5 winning.

35. ♜a2 ♜g8 36. g4 ♜h6?!

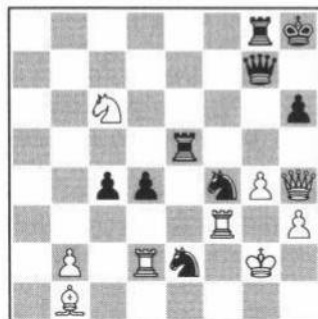
I'm not really sure what this move was for.

37. ♜xb4 ♜xe5 38. ♜d2 ♜e2+

38... ♜e3!

39. ♜g2

Things are starting to become quite unclear. 39... ♜d4 40. ♜c6 ♜3+?! 41. ♜xf3 ♜6f4+



42. ♜f2?

After the correct 42. ♜f1! Black might get into trouble after 42... ♜e6 43. ♜xd4 ♜xd4 44. ♜xf4.

42... ♜e6

Starting a forced sequence of moves leading to a better endgame.

43. ♜xd4 ♜xd4 44. ♜xf4 ♜e5 45. ♜e4 ♜f8+

45... ♜h2+ 46. ♜e3 ♜g1+ 47. ♜f2 ♜xb1 48. ♜xe6 ♜xe6 49. ♜f6+ ♜g7 50. ♜xh6+ ♜h7 51. ♜xh7+ ♜xh7 52. ♜d4 is only equal.

46. ♜g2

Black wins after 46. ♜e1? ♜xe4+!

46... ♜f3 47. ♜xe5 ♜xh4+ 48. ♜g3 ♜xe5 49. ♜xh4 ♜b8 50. ♜a2 ♜c5 51. ♜c2 ♜b4 52. ♜d2 ♜g7 53. ♜d4 ♜f6 54. b3??

54. ♜e4.

54... ♜e5

Forcing the exchange of rooks, while White's bishop is trapped on a2.

55. ♜xc4 ♜xc4 56. bxc4 ♜b2

The rest is of no interest.

57. ♜h5 ♜xa2 58. ♜xh6 ♜h2 59. g5 ♜xh3+ 60. ♜g6 ♜c3 0-1

CHAPTER 14

Jeroen Bosch

Taimanov's Surprise Sac in the Kan



The intrepid 7...xe4

This SOS chapter is based on an off-hand suggestion by Mark Taimanov. In his 1984 monograph on the Sicilian Paulsen (Batsford) he casually mentions an early knight sac in a main-line Kan Variation. Only to continue that, even though the move is interesting, it has yet to be tested in practice.

It is always nice when a grandmaster gives away a novelty for free. Yet in this case, his readership was not convinced. Although some games did feature 7...xe4!? we had to wait until 2002 for a top-level encounter. In the match Moscow vs. St Petersburg, an intrepid Peter Svidler braved Alexander Morozevich's attack with this provocative move from his townsman.

Svidler's example has been followed in recent years by talented young players such as Mark Paragua, Jan Werle and Arik Braun. It seems that strong players are willing to risk 7...xe4 for the right occasion.

□ **Alexander Morozevich**

■ **Peter Svidler**

Moscow-St Petersburg 2002

1.e4 c5 2.f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.fxd4 a6 5.c4 f6 6.f3 c3 ♖c7

The alternative 6...b4 is considered riskier. The text prepares the pin and usually provokes White into playing the cautious

7.a3

An important tabiya position in the 5.c4 Kan. White is ready for a hedgehog after 7...d6, 7...c6 or 7...b6. To quote from Kasparov's oeuvre:

– 7...d6 8. e3 b6 9. c1 d7 10. e2 b7 11. f3 e7 12.0-0 0-0, Kasparov-Kramnik, Moscow 2001.

– 7...c6 8. e3 e7 9. c1 0-0 10. e2 d4! 11. xxd4 d6 12.0-0 b8 13. b6, Kasparov-Ivanchuk, Linares 2002.

White is slightly better in both cases.

If you want to avoid this type of position, if you don't mind taking risks and if you have steady nerves, take a deep breath and play...

7...dxe4!?

It sure makes for an interesting diagram! In fact – here comes the good news – it is not even a sacrifice! Black wins the knight back by force. On the downside, you need to bring your queen out into the open to win back material, and you are opening some lines and diagonals in the process.

However, please remember it is all for a good cause: you are avoiding yet another hedgehog with that eternal space disadvantage.

8. dxe4

It is only when White realizes that he does not actually win a piece that he may start to investigate 8. dxe6!?. After 8. dxe6, play could continue 8...dxe6 9. dxe4 e7



10. d3 (after 10. e2 0-0 11.0-0, Stevic-Kellenberger, Bratislava jr 1993, Black should play 11...c6 or 11...d7 instead of the game continuation 11...f5) 10...0-0 11.0-0 (less good was 11. b5 f5 12. c3 d8 13. e2 c6 14.0-0 d4 15. d1 b6 16. e3 b7 Mandl-Lang Zalan, Germany tt 2000), and now 11...c6 looks about equal.

8...e5 9. d3

White sensibly continues his development instead of desperately trying to hang on to a knight that will soon be lost anyway. Practice has also seen:

● 9. d3 d5 10. cxd5 (Black is slightly better after 10. f3 dxe4 11. xxe4 xxe4+ 12. fxe4, Schiebuhr-Gerstner, Bargteheide 1989) 10...exd5 11. f3 d7 12. e3 dxe4 13. xxe4 xxe4 14. fxe4 e5 (perhaps 14...dxf6 is even stronger 15. e5 g4 16. f4 c5 17. d1 0-0 18. e2 d8 Adriano-Barnsley, cr 1995) 15. e2 d6 16. h3 with equality, Angström-Ronlan, cr 1993.

● 9. f3 d5 and Black retrieves the knight with equal play.

● White can develop the bishop in a more modest fashion, too: 9. e2 xxe4 10.0-0 c6



– 11. dxc6 bxc6 12. b4 (or 12. d2 e7 13. c3 0-0, Puijman-Werle, Vlissingen 2004) 12...e7 13. b2 0-0 14. c5, and

White had some compensation in Schmaus-Hornung, Munich 1993.

– 11. ♖e3 ♖e7 12. ♖e1 ♖e5 13. ♖xc6 bxc6 14. ♖d4 ♖g5 15. ♖d3, and again White has compensation for the pawn, Caminade-Renaudin, Paris 1991.

● 9. ♖c2 can be answered by 9... ♖xd4 10. ♖e3 ♖e5. Also possible is 9... f5 10. ♖e3 ♖xe4 (or 10... fxe4) 11. ♖d3 ♖xg2 12. 0-0-0 ♖c6 with sharp play Guerra Costa-Perez Fungueiro, Pontevedra 2004.

● 9. ♖e3 ♖xe4 10. ♖d2 and now 10... ♖c6 looks logical. Instead the game Maenhout-Dutreeuw, Belgium tt 2005/06, went 10... d6 11. ♖d3 (11. f4 looks stronger) 11... ♖xg2 12. 0-0-0 ♖h3 and play somewhat resembled the Polugaevsky Variation in that Black has taken a few pawns with his queen while White has mobilized all his forces in the meantime. In the game Black obtained winning play only to overlook a repetition.

Let's continue with the main game. With 9. ♖d3 White returns the knight and sacrifices a pawn to boot for superior development.

9... ♖xd4 10. 0-0

In some correspondence games White postponed castling:

● 10. ♖c2 f5 11. ♖e3 ♖e5 12. f4 ♖c7 13. ♖c3 ♖c5 14. ♖f2 d6 15. ♖xf5? exf5 16. ♖d5 ♖c6 (16... ♖d8! is clearly better) 17. b4! ♖e6 18. bxc5 dxc5 19. 0-0, with compensation for the pawn, Pfeiffer-Eiselt, cr 1989.

● 10. ♖e2 ♖e7 (10... f5) 11. f4 (11. ♖e3 ♖e5 12. 0-0 f5 13. f4 ♖c7 14. ♖c3 d6? 15. ♖xf5! 0-0 – 15... exf5 16. ♖d5+ – 16. ♖c2±, Staudler-Neckel, cr 1986) 11... ♖b6 12. ♖e3 ♖a5+ 13. ♖d2 ♖c7 14. 0-0-0? (14... f5) 15. f5! exf5? (15... f6) 16. ♖xf5 g6? (16... d6 or 16... d5 were necessary) 17. ♖f6+ ♖xf6 18. ♖xf6 with a superior game in Kuvaldin-Vasiakin, cr 1990.

These games are useful, since they illustrate

some standard manoeuvres. Thus White will aim for f4-f5 to open files. Black will often prevent this by playing f5 himself. It should come as no surprise (considering his lack of development and uncastled king) that Black has to watch out for tactics – especially the sacrifice ♖f5 to obtain the d5 square for the knight.



10... f5

This move, which prevents White from playing f4-f5, was an important novelty at the time.

After 10... ♖c6 11. ♖c2 f5 (if 11... ♖e7 12. ♖e3 ♖e5 13. f4 ♖c7 Annageldyev-Mahjoob, Kish 2003, then White should consider 14. f5 or 14. c5 rather than the game continuation 14. ♖g5) 12. ♖e3 fxe4 (an interesting alternative for the standard 12... ♖e5 13. f4 ♖c7) 13. ♖xd4 ♖xd4 14. ♖c3 ♖c5 15. b4 exd3 16. ♖xd3 ♖a7 17. c5 ♖f5 18. ♖ac1 0-0 19. ♖fe1 b5 with unclear play, in the end the three pieces had a field day in the game Krstic-Braun, Balatonlelle 2006.

Better is 11. ♖e3 when after 11... ♖e5 the game Ribeiro-Costa, Portugal 1993, continued 12. b4 ♖e7 (perhaps here 12... f5) 13. f4 ♖c7 14. ♖h5!? d6 15. b5 d8 16. ♖d4 ♖f8 17. ♖ae1±. Even better than 12. b4 is 12. f4 ♖c7 13. f5 (the standard approach) 13... d6 14. ♖c1 ♖e5 (14... exf5 15. ♖c3±) 15. ♖b1 ♖e7 16. f6 gxf6 17. ♖xf6+ ♖xf6 18. ♖xf6±

♠d7? 19.c5! dxc5 20.♠f4+–, Watanabe-C.Braga, Sao Paulo 1991.

Quite risky is 10...♠e7. The game Annageldyev-Paragua, Alushta 2004, went 11.♠e3 ♖xb2 12.♖h5 (12.f4 looks better) 12...g6 13.♖h6 ♜g8 14.♠g5?! f5! 15.♠xe7? fxe4 16.♖h4 g5! 17.♠xg5 exd3 18.♠f6 ♖e2 19.♖xh7 ♠xg2+ and Black won.

11.♠e3

Less critical is 11.♠c3 ♠c6 12.♠e3 ♖f6, as in M.Müller-A.Heinz, Bundesliga B 2003/04. White has compensation for the pawn, but nothing special.

11...♖e5

It is very risky to take the proverbial poisoned pawn. The game M.Pavlov-Derjabin, Alushta 2007, went: 11...♖xb2 12.♜b1 ♖xa3 13.♜b3 ♖e7 14.♠c5 ♖f7 15.♠d6+ ♠xd6 16.♠xd6 and White had a huge edge in development and controlled a lot of dark squares in return for three(!) pawns. Still if you don't take chances you won't make advances?

12.f4 ♖c7



13.♠g5

This is ostensibly the most aggressive move. The alternative is 13.♠c3!?. For the moment 13...♠e7? fails to 14.♠xf5! exf5 15.♠d5 ♖c6 16.♠e1!±. So 13...♠c5 is forced when, just as in the game, 14.♖h5+ g6 15.♖h3 forces another weakness. Without the (vul-

nerable) knight on g5 there is no defensive resource like 15...h6. Therefore, White has compensation for the pawn.

Instead of 15.♖h3 White can also play 15.♖e2. The game Michielsen-Balint, Haarlem 2005, saw: 15...0-0 (perhaps 15...♖b6) 16.♠a4 ♠xe3+ 17.♖xe3 b5 (preferable is 17...♠c6) 18.♠b6 ♠a7 19.cxb5 axb5 20.♠ac1 with the clearly better game.

13...♠c5 14.♖h5+ g6 15.♖h3

After this move White appears to be worse. In practice White has later concentrated on the move 15.♖e2 here. A young Magnus Carlsen led the way: 15...♖b6 (or 15...0-0 16.b4 ♠xe3+ 17.♖xe3 h6 18.♠f3 ♠c6 19.c5 with typical compensation in Swinkels-A.Heinz, Pulvermühle 2004) 16.♠xc5 ♖xc5+ 17.♠h1 White has dangerous compensation for the pawn. Note that her majesty is better placed on e2 than on h3 as in the main game. 17...♠c6 (after 17...♖e7 18.b4 – 18.c5 – 18...b6 19.♖f3 – 19.♖e3 – 19...♠a7 20.♖e3 ♠b7 21.♠e2 h6 22.♠h3 ♠c6 23.♠f3 b5 24.♠xc6 dxc6 25.c5 White had more than enough for the pawn in T.Heinz-Vuillermoz, France 2004/05) 18.b4 ♖f8 (avoiding 18...♖d4 19.♠xf5! 0-0 20.♠ad1) 19.♖b2 h6 20.♠f3 ♠g8 21.b5 and it was no fun playing black in Carlsen-Trygstad, Fredrikstad 2003. So if you are willing to take up 7...♠xe4 the position after 15.♖e2 appears to be crucial.

15...h6! 16.♠ae1 ♖b6



Black is still dangerously behind in development, and he won't catch up soon either. However, Svidler has cleverly provoked his opponent, who is now forced to sac more material.

17. ♖xf5

No better is 17. ♖xc5 ♖xc5+ 18. ♖h1 ♖d4!, when White has to give his bishop too (19. ♖e5 ♖c6). After 19. ♖xf5 hxg5! (but not 19... gxf5 20. ♖h5+ ♖d8 21. ♖d1! ♖f6 22. ♖f7! ♖xf7 23. ♖xf7+ ♖e7 24. ♖xh8 ♖f6 25. g4) 20. ♖xg6+ ♖d8 Black is OK.

The circumspect 17. ♖f3 brings no relief either after the simple 17... ♖xe3+ 18. ♖fxe3 ♖xb2, and even the complex 17... ♖d4 seems to work, i.e. 18. b4 ♖d6 19. ♖xf5 hxg5 20. ♖xg6+ ♖d8 21. ♖g3 ♖xe3+ 22. ♖xe3 ♖c6.

17... gxf5 18. ♖h5+? ♖d8

More dangerous is 18... ♖e7. White loses after 19. ♖f7+ ♖d6. However, 19. ♖xc5+ ♖xc5+ 20. ♖h1 is still unclear.

Now comes another more or less forced sequence.

19. ♖f7+ ♖c7 20. ♖xh8 ♖xe3+ 21. ♖h1 ♖xb2

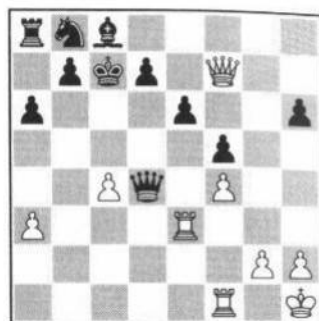
Or 21... ♖d4.

22. ♖xe3 ♖xh8 23. ♖f7 ♖d4!

Centralizing the queen is more important than developing pieces. White has decent counterplay after 23... ♖c6? 24. ♖xe6 ♖d8 25. ♖f6 ♖xf6 26. ♖xf6.

Also playable though is 23... ♖b6 24. c5+ ♖a7.

After Svidler's 23... ♖d4 Black's entire queenside is still undeveloped, but White has too few pieces left to inconvenience the black king. Svidler's material advantage now carries the day. The rest of the game needs little or no comment.



24. ♖xe6 ♖xc4 25. ♖fe1 ♖xf4 26. ♖6e5 ♖c6 27. ♖xf5 ♖d2 28. ♖ff1 b5 29. ♖d1 ♖e3 30. ♖f3 ♖e4 31. h3 h5 32. ♖xh5 ♖b7 33. ♖g5 ♖e8

Black finally completes his development.

34. ♖fd3 ♖e5 35. ♖e3 ♖c2 36. ♖ee1 ♖c6 37. ♖d2 ♖c3 38. ♖de2



38...d6 There is no need for the flashy 38... ♖xh3+ 39. ♖g1 ♖h8 40. ♖xe5 ♖g8, and Black wins. 39. ♖e3 ♖c4 40. ♖g3 ♖b6 41. ♖d2 ♖c5 42. ♖h2 ♖c4 43. ♖c3 ♖xe1 44. ♖xe1 ♖xa3 45. h4 b4 46. ♖g5 ♖d4 47. ♖g3 ♖c2 48. ♖g4 ♖e4 49. ♖f4 ♖e3 50. ♖g8 ♖e5 51. ♖g3 ♖xg2 52. ♖xe4 ♖xe4 53. ♖xd6+ ♖b5 0-1

CHAPTER 15

Adrian Mikhalchishin

Anti-Grünfeld and Anti-Volga



1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.d5!?

An interesting and quite obvious way of countering the Grünfeld Defence is occupying the d5 square. With the move 3.d5 White gains space and he seriously limits Black's abilities, but at the same time White also has less options regarding the transformation of structure. It helps if you play the Sämisch against the King's Indian.

Black can respond in a King's Indian way. Alternatively, he might like to play in Grünfeld (c7-c6) or Volga-style (b7-b5). Let us consider these options.

- I 3...b5
- II 3...c6
- III 3...g7

Variation I

3...b5!? 4.cxb5

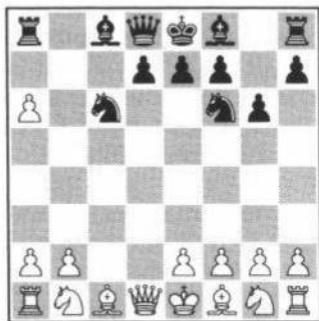
One could try 4.a4!? bxc4 5.Qc3 g7 6.e4 d6 7.Qxc4 (the typical 7.Qf3 0-0 8.Qd2 attempting to take with a knight on c4 ought to be tested) 7...0-0 8.Qf3 c5 9.h3 Qa6 10.0-0 Qb4 11.Qd2 e6 12.dxe6 Qxe6 with complicated play, Horvath-Feher, Szekszard 1996.

4...a6 5.bxa6

5.e3 g7 6.Qc3 0-0 7.Qf3 Qb7 8.Qe2?! (correct is 8.bxa6 Qxa6 9.Qc4 Qb4 10.0-0±) 8...axb5 9.Qxb5 Qxd5 10.Qxd5 Qxd5 11.Qxd5 c6 12.Qxc6 Qxc6 13.0-0 Qc7 14.Qd1 Spasov-Ribli, Camaguey 1974. And here either 14...Qb8 or 14...Qb4 leads to excellent play for Black.

5...c6 6.dxc6

Or 6.♘c3 cxd5 7.♙xd5 ♖a5+ 8.♘c3 ♕g7 9.♙d2 ♙xa6 10.♙f3 ♙b7 11.e3 0-0 12.♙e2 ♖f5 13.0-0 e5 14.♖b1! and White has a healthy extra pawn, Peev-Radev, Bulgarian Championship Pernik 1975.

6...♙xc6**7.♙c3**

This is stronger than 7.e3 ♕g7 8.♙f3 0-0 9.♙e2 ♙xa6 10.♙xa6? ♖a5+ 11.♙c3 ♙c4! 12.0-0 ♙xc3 13.bxc3 ♙xa6 when White has an extra pawn, but several pawn weaknesses, Dzindzichashvili-Adorjan, Amsterdam 1978.

7...♙xa6 8.g3! ♕g7 9.♙g2 0-0 10.♙h3 ♖b6 11.0-0 ♙c4

Possible is the immediate 11...e6 with the idea of ...d5.

12.♙f4 e6 13.♖d2 ♖a5 14.♙b1 d5 15.b3 ♙a6 16.a3 ♖c7 17.♙b2± Varga-Fehér, Hungary tt 1997/98.

Variation II**3...c6 4.♙c3 cxd5**

A gambit somewhat reminiscent of the Volga is 4...b5?. However, after 5.cxb5 cxb5 6.♙xb5 ♖a5+ 7.♙c3 ♙b7 8.♙d2 ♙xd5 9.♙xd5 ♖xd5 10.♙c3± this leads to inferior endgame prospects.

5.cxd5 ♖a5

If Black opts for the quiet 5...♕g7 then co-

mes 6.e4 d6 7.♙f3 0-0 8.♙e2 ♕g4 (the sharp 8...b5 is like hitting water with an axe: 9.a3! a6 10.♙e3 ♙bd7 11.♙d4 ♙b7 12.f3 ♙c8 13.0-0 ♙e5 14.♖d2 ♙c4 15.♙xc4 ♙xc4 16.b3 ♙c8 17.a4 with a clear advantage for White, Gheorghiu-Honfi, Baden Baden 1981) 9.♙e3 ♙bd7 10.0-0 (quite possible is 10.♙d2 or 10.♙d4 with a slight advantage for White) 10...♙xf3 (the exchange is not essential, although White leaves the f3-square on the following move) 11.♙xf3 ♖a5 12.♙e2 (interesting is 12.a3 ♙fc8 13.b4 ♖d8 14.♙d4) 12...♙fc8 13.♙c1 ♖b4! 14.♖c2 ♙c5 15.f3 ♙fd7 16.♙f2 ♙b6 17.a3 ♖b3 18.♙f1 ♖xc2 19.♙cxc2 ♙ba4 20.♙b5 with a somewhat better position for White, Hort-Ogaard, Reykjavik 1978.

**6.f3!?**

Aiming for a Sämisch like position. White has other options too:

– 6.♖b3 ♕g7 7.♙d2 d6 8.♙c1 (8.e4!? 0-0 9.f3) 8...♙a6 9.e4 0-0 10.♙f3 ♙d7! 11.♖xb7 ♙c5 12.b4 ♙xb7 13.bxa5 ♙c5! 14.e5 ♙g4! with complicated play, Lilienthal-Shamkovich, Moscow 1962.

– 6.g3 ♙e4? (best is 6...b5! as played by Uhlmann against Kortchnoi in Sarajevo 1969) 7.♖d4 ♙xc3 8.♙d2 ♖xd5? (8...♙g8 9.♙xc3 was much better for White in Euwe-Nestler, Dubrovnik ol 1950) 9.♖xc3 ♙c6 10.♖xh8 ♙d4 11.♙c1 ♖xh1 12.♖xd4

♟xg1 13.♟xa7 1-0 Oakley-Nash, England cr 1954.

– 6.♟d2 ♟g7 7.e4 d6 8.♟d3 0-0 9.♟ge2 ♟bd7 10.a3 ♟e5 11.0-0 ♟d7 and Black has excellent opportunities.

6...e6

After 6...♟g7 7.e4 d6 8.♟e3 0-0 9.♟d2 we reach the Sämisch Variation of the King's Indian.

7.dxe6

This is more logical than 7.e4 ♟g7 8.♟h3 0-0 9.♟d2 (as for 9.♟e2, there is 9...b5 10.dxe6 dxe6 11.♟xb5 ♟xe4 12.fxe4 ♟xc3+ 13.bxc3 ♟xb5 14.♟f2 ♟c6 with good play) 9...♟b6 10.♟a4 ♟d4 11.♟c3 ♟e3+ 12.♟e2 exd5 13.♟d4!? ♟h6 14.e5 ♟e8 15.♟f2 d6 16.exd6 ♟xd4 17.♟xd4 ♟xd6 18.♟xd5 ♟f5 with excellent play for Black.

7...dxe6 8.e4 ♟g7 9.♟a4+ ♟xa4 10.♟xa4 ♟d7 11.♟c3 a6 12.♟e3 ♟c6 13.♟ge2



Here the players agreed a draw, but White has a comfortable endgame. Bukic-Pribyl, Vrnjacka Banja Zonal 1972.

Variation III

3...♟g7

Also possible is 3...e5, after 4.♟c3 Black chose an original way to avoid the King's Indian set-up in Bosboom-Nijboer, Amsterdam 2002: 4...♟c5 5.a3!? 0-0 6.♟f3

e4 7.♟d4 ♟e8 8.e3 c6 9.♟e2 cxd5 10.cxd5 a6 11.b4 ♟f8 12.♟b2 d6 13.0-0 ♟bd7. Now 14.♟b3 would have given White a slight advantage.

4.♟c3 0-0

After 4...e6 5.♟f3 exd5 6.cxd5 d6 7.g3 0-0 8.♟g2 ♟bd7 9.0-0 ♟e5 10.♟e3 ♟e8 11.♟d4 a5 12.♟e1 b6 13.a3 White is somewhat better, Rytov-Ludolf, Tartu ch-EST 1972

5.e4 d6

In case of a direct transposition into the King's Indian by 5...e5, then 6.♟e2 d6 7.g4! and Black experiences difficulties.

6.♟f3

The main continuation. Quite possible too is 6.♟d3 c6 7.♟f3 (7.♟ge2 should be tested in practice) 7...♟a6 8.0-0 ♟c5 9.♟c2 a5 10.♟e3 ♟c7 11.h3 ♟e8 12.♟e1 e5 13.a3 ♟d7 14.♟c1 cxd5 15.cxd5 b5 16.b4 axb4 17.axb4 ♟a6 18.♟d3! with a white advantage, Hort-Sax, Hastings 1977/78.

6...c6

6...e6 7.♟e2 exd5 8.exd5 (8.cxd5!? ♟e8 9.♟d2) 8...♟g4 9.0-0 ♟bd7 10.h3 ♟xf3 11.♟xf3 ♟e8 12.♟f4 ♟c5 13.♟c2 a5 14.♟fel ♟d7 15.♟b5 Cicak-Socko, Cork 2005.

If 6...e5 then White may be able to find a more useful move than 7.♟e2 which would transpose into the Petrosian system of the King's Indian.

7.♟e2 ♟a6



8. ♖e3

8.0-0 ♖c5 9. ♗c2 cxd5 10. cxd5 ♖d7 11. ♖e3 ♜c8 12. ♜d2 b5 13. a3 a5 14. ♗b1 b4 15. axb4 axb4 16. ♜a2 ♜b8 with excellent play for Black in Jacimovic-Bogdanovic, Zlatibor tt 1989.

8...e6 9.dxc6?

This looks like the wrong decision, clearly better is 9.dxe6!? ♖xe6 10.0-0 ♗e7 11. ♗c2 ♜g4 12. ♖g5 ♗c7 13. ♜ad1 ♜ae8 14. ♖f4 ♜e5 15. b3 ♖c8 16. ♜d4 ♜c5 17. h3 a5

18. ♜fe1 and White had a space advantage in the game Uhlmann-Liebert, Zinnowitz 1971.

9...bxc6 10.0-0 ♜g4 11. ♖g5 ♗c7 12. ♗c2

Also interesting is 12.h3!?, forcing the opponent's knight to make clear choices.

12...h6 13. ♖d2 e5 14. ♜a4 ♜f6 15. b4 ♜b8 16. a3 d5!

with sharp play, Shabalov-V.Mikhalevski, Foxwoods 2006.

CHAPTER 16

Igor Glek & Jean-Olivier Leconte

French: the Gledhill Attack



A new direction

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.c3 f6 4.e5 df7 5.g4

This is the so-called Gledhill Attack. It is named after the English chess player Walter Gledhill (1854-1917) who published his analysis in 1901 in *British Chess Magazine*. None other than World Champion Emanuel Lasker added his comments in the magazine. With such support it is not surprising that in the first half of the twentieth century the Gledhill Attack was played by some of the best players in the world. Thus your database will reveal that Marshall, Euwe, Bogoljubow, Tartakower, and Eliskases all tried their hand at 5.g4. Theory later came to frown upon the early queen move though,

when, after 5...c5, the standard replies 6.f3 and 6.e3 were more or less refuted.

In this article we will make a case for the Gledhill Attack building our argument upon Jean-Olivier Leconte's novelty of 6.dxc5.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.c3 f6 4.e5 df7 5.g4 c5

This is clearly the crucial move. In case of 5...f5 White can play 6.g3 c5 7.dxc5 xc5 8.e3 c6 9.xc5. While 5...h5 can be met by 6.f4 c5 7.f3. Now 7...c6? is refuted by 8.g5! winning. White has a slight edge after 7...cxd4 8.b5 c6 9.bxd4.

6.dxc5!

This novelty of Leconte is the crux. Other moves are known to be bad:

– The *Encyclopedia* gives 6.♘e3 ♖c6 7.0-0-0 cxd4 8.♙xd4 ♖xd4 9.♙xd4 f5 (9...♗xe5) 10.exf6 ♖xf6 ♠ Max Euwe.

– While 6.♗f3 cxd4 7.♗b5 (or 7.♗xd4 ♖xe5 8.♙g3 ♖bc6 9.♗b5 a6 10.♙xc6+ ♖xc6 11.♗e3 ♗e7 ♠ Estrin-Lilienthal, Baku 1951) 7...♖c6 8.♗d6+ ♙xd6 9.♙xg7 ♗xe5 10.♗xe5 ♙f6 was an edge for Black in Bogoljubow-Réti, Mährisch Ostrau 1923.



After the text, Black can try:

- I 6...♗xe5
II 6...♗c6

Instead 6...f5 7.♙g3 is just good for White. The correct answer to 6...h5 is 7.♙f4 (7.♙g3 h4 8.♙f4 ♖c6 9.♗f3 ♙xc5 10.♗b5 a6 11.♗d6+ ♙xd6 12.exd6 ♙f6 was good for Black in Schmidt-Haas, Germany tt 1995/96) 7...♙xc5 8.♗f3 ♖c6 (if 8...♙b6 then either 9.♙g3± or 9.♗a4 ♙xf2+? 10.♗e2) 9.♗e2± followed by castling, or 9.♙g3±.

Variation I

6...♗xe5 7.♙g3

The white queen eyes both g7 and c7. Black now has two major options: 7...♗g6 and 7...♗bc6.

The alternative 7...♗ec6 is good for White after 8.♗b5 ♗a6 9.c3.

More serious is 7...f6 which leads to a mess

after 8.♗e3 (or 8.♗b5!? a6? 9.♗d6+ ♙xd6 10.♙xg7 ♗f7 11.cxd6) 8...♙a5 9.0-0-0 ♖bc6, and now:



- 10.♗b5!? d4 (10...♗f7 11.♗b1) 11.♙f4 ♙xa2 (11...a6 12.♗d6+ ♙xd6 13.♙xg7 ♗f7 14.♙xd6 ♙xa2 15.♗e2!) 12.♖c7+ ♗f7 13.♗xa8 ♙xc5±.
- 10.f4 ♗d7 11.♗b5.

● 7...♗g6 8.♗b5!

The game Niedra-Nitzsche, Germany cr 1988, went 8.h4 ♙xc5 9.h5 ♖e7 10.♙xg7 ♙g8 11.♙xh7.

8...♗a6

This seems forced in view of 8...e5 9.h4 a6 (not 9...h5 10.♙d3 a6 11.♙xg6) 10.h5 axb5 11.hxg6 fxg6 12.♙xh7! with a winning edge.

9.h4



9...♙f6

Black fares no better after:

– 9...e5 10.h5 ♖f4 11.♗d6+! (this check followed by taking on g7 is a recurring theme in our 6.dxc5 system) 11...♗xd6 12.♗xg7 ♜f8 13.cxd6 ♗xd6 14.♗xf4 exf4 15.0-0-0±.

– 9...h5 10.♗d3 ♗f6 (10...♗xc5 11.♗xg6 fxg6 12.♗xg6+ ♖f8 13.♜h3) 11.♗d6+ (11.♗f3 ♗xc5 12.0-0 is also very good for White) 11...♗xd6 12.♗xd6 ♗e7 13.♗xg6 fxg6 14.♗g5 ♗xd6 15.cxd6 ♖d7 16.♗f3 ♖xd6 17.♗f4+ ♖e7 18.♗e5 ♖f6 19.♜h3. White will soon recover his small investment with interest.

10.h5 ♗e5 11.♗g5 ♗f5 12.♗d4 ♗e4+ 13.♗e3 And now after **13...♗xc5 14.♜h4** Black's queen is trapped.

● 7...♗bc6 8.♗b5! ♗xc5

White is just better after 8...f6 9.♗d6+ ♗xd6 10.♗xg7 ♗f7 11.cxd6 ♗b4 12.♖d1 ♗xd6 13.♗xf6.

9.♗f4!

White must consider his development too.



9...a6 10.♗xe5 axb5

We also prefer White after 10...♗xe5 11.♗xe5 axb5 12.♗xg7 ♜f8 13.♗xb5+ ♗d7 14.♗xd7+ ♗xd7 15.♗e2 ♗b5 16.a3 d4 (16...♗a5+ 17.c3 ♗b6 18.0-0 was good for White in a 2007 ICC game of Jean-Olivier Leconte) 17.♗xh7 ♗xb2 18.0-0±.

11.♗xg7

Bad is 11.♗xg7? ♜g8 12.♗f6 ♜xg3 13.♗xd8 ♜g4 14.♗f6 ♜g4.

11...♜f8 12.♗f6! ♗b6

Attacking f2. Also interesting is 12...♗a5+ 13.c3 b4 14.♗d3 bxc3 15.bxc3 ♗b6:



– 16.♗h3 e5 17.♜b1 ♗a7 18.♗xh7 ♗xh3 19.♗xh3 ♗xf2+ 20.♖f1 e4 21.♗xe4!? dxe4 22.♗d1 ♜g8 23.♗d7+ ended in a draw in another ICC game of Jean-Olivier.

– Stronger was 16.♗g3! ♗b2 17.♜b1 ♗xa2 18.♗f3 ♗d7 19.0-0±.

13.♗d3!

This sacrifice is best. Rather than losing time by protecting f2 White makes Black lose time by taking an 'insignificant' pawn. Unclear is 13.♗g3 ♗b4 14.♗d3 ♗xd3+ 15.cxd3. Just plain bad is 13.♗h3? e5 14.0-0-0 ♜xa2.

13...♗xf2+ 14.♖f1 ♗d4

The alternatives are not too uplifting either: 14...♗d7 15.♗f3 ♗c5 16.♗xh7; 14...♗b4 15.♗xh7 ♗xg1 16.♜xg1 ♗d7 17.♗g3. White is better in both cases.

15.♗f3 ♗xf6 16.♗xf6 ♗d7

No better is 16...h5 17.♜e1 ♗b4 18.♗g5 ♗xd3 19.cxd3 ♜xa2 20.♗h7 ♜g8 21.♗e5 ♗d8 22.♜cl ♜a8 23.♗f4±.

17.♗g5 ♗d4 18.♗xh7 ♗xf6+ 19.♗xf6+ ♖e7 20.♗xd7 ♖xd7 21.♗xb5

And White is a sound pawn up in the ending.

Variation II

6...♟c6 7.♟f3

If you enjoy analysing for yourself you may want to consider 7.f4.

7...♟dxe5

In a training game, my wife – WGM Maria Leconte Nepeina – played 7...a6. The game went: 8.♟g5!? ♟c7 (perhaps 8...♟a5 9.0-0-0 ♟dxe5 10.♟xe5 ♟xe5 and now either 11.♟e2 or 11.♟a4+) 9.0-0-0 ♟dxe5 10.♟xe5 ♟xe5 (not 10...♟xe5 11.♟a4!) 11.♟g3 ♟xc5 12.♟e4!? ♟a7 (12...♟xe4 13.♟xe5!! ♟xe5 14.♟d8 mate) 13.♟f6+! ♟xf6 (13...♟f8 14.♟h5∞) 14.♟xf6 ♟xf2 15.♟xf2 ♟g4 16.♟f3 ♟xf6 17.♟xf6 ♟g8 18.♟b1! ♟e7 19.♟h6 with more than enough for the pawn.

On move 8 it was also interesting to play 8.♟f4 ♟c7 9.♟e2 ♟dxe5 10.♟xe5 ♟xe5 11.♟g3 ♟f6 12.b4±.

If Black plays 7...♟xc5 then 8.a3!?, and now:

– 8...g6 9.♟g5 ♟b6 10.♟b5 ♟g7 11.♟h4 ♟d7 12.♟f6 0-0 13.b4 ♟a6 14.♟xg7 ♟xg7 15.♟f6+ ♟g8 16.0-0 d4 17.♟xc6 ♟xc6 18.♟e2 ♟xf3 19.♟xf3±

– 8...a6 9.b4!? ♟d7 10.♟g3 ♟c7 11.♟b2 ♟g6 (11...♟dxe5 12.♟xe5 ♟xe5+ 13.♟xe5 ♟xe5 14.♟xd5 exd5 15.♟xe5 a5 16.b5±) 12.b5 axb5 13.♟xb5 ♟a5+ 14.♟c3.

8.♟xe5 ♟xe5 9.♟g3



● 9...♟c6

Apart from the text and 9...♟g6 we analyse:

– 9...f6 10.♟f4 ♟g6 11.♟c7± ♟e7 12.♟d6 ♟d8 13.♟d3.

– 9...♟c4 10.♟xc4 dxc4 11.0-0±.

– 9...♟d7 10.♟b5 e5 11.♟d6+ (11.b4!?) 11...♟xd6 12.♟xg7 ♟f6 13.♟xf6 ♟xf6 14.cxd6 ♟d7 15.f4±.

10.♟b5 e5 11.♟d6+!

Again the same check spoils all the fun for Black.

11...♟xd6 12.♟xg7 ♟f8 13.cxd6 ♟xd6 14.♟h6

White wins an exchange.

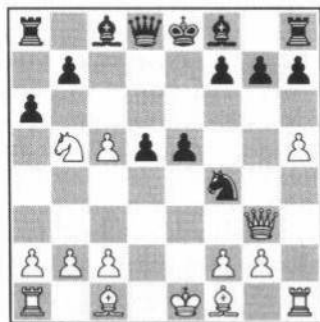
● 9...♟g6 10.♟b5 e5

10...♟xc5 11.♟c7+ ♟f8 12.♟xa8 ♟d6 13.♟b3 b6 14.a4 ♟b7 15.a5 ♟c5 16.axb6 axb6 17.♟a7 ♟xa8 18.♟a4 and White won in Leconte-GranSiurell, ICC 2007.

11.h4 a6

11...h5 12.♟d3 a6 13.♟xg6 axb5 14.♟xe5+ (14.♟d3!) 14...♟e7 15.♟xe7+ ♟xc7 16.♟d3 ♟d7 17.♟e3 with a clear plus in Leconte-Cuenca, ICC 2007.

12.h5 ♟f4



13.♟d6+! ♟xd6 14.♟xg7 ♟f8 15.cxd6 ♟xd6 16.♟xf4 exf4 17.0-0-0 ♟e6 18.♟xh7

With an obvious advantage.

CHAPTER 17

Hikaru Nakamura

Not Going for Scholar's Mate





1.e4 e5 2.Qh5

Some two years ago I played the now rather (in)famous 2.Qh5 against GM Sasikiran from India. While I am not happy with the final result of the game I still feel that this funny looking line is quite playable. With 2.Qh5 I do not intend to go for the four move checkmate known as Scholar's Mate. Instead my main goal is simply to develop the bishop to c4, the knight to e2, and castle kingside, with a small advantage.

The first player who seriously developed 2.Qh5 as a system was master Bernard Parham from Indiana. Many people consider the idea of bringing out the queen so early in the game to be very crude and rudimentary. However it is fairly logical as it creates mat-

ing threats and potentially allows White to develop his kingside pieces very harmoniously. Unlike Parham, I do not have a lot of confidence in Qh5 against other systems such as the Caro-Kann or the Sicilian. I learned this the hard way when I got destroyed by GM Volokitin after 1.e4 c5 2.Qh5 Qf6 3.Qh4 Qc6 and so on (Lausanne 2005).

Playing 2.Qh5 in the Open Games is an easy way to avoid theory... or was. It seems that ever since I played it, it has been studied quite a bit. If an amateur wishes to play it as a main opening, it is possible. However, if anyone above master level plays this opening, they should use it as a surprise weapon only.

 **Hikaru Nakamura**
 **Krishnan Sasikiran**
 Copenhagen/Malmö 2005

1.e4 e5 2.♞h5 ♘c6

This natural move is the most popular reply in practice. Please note that 2...♘d6 3.♙c4 g6 4.♞f3 will transpose into the main line.

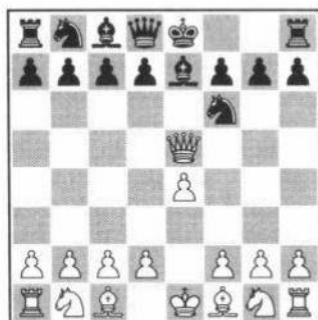
Black may consider 2...♞f6 which leads to a fairly standard position after 3.♙c4 ♘c6 4.c3 g6 5.♞e2 ♘g7 6.♘f3 ♞e7 7.d3 ♘f6 8.0-0-0 9.♞e1 d6 10.♙b3 with a strong resemblance to a Ruy Lopez.



In the rapid game Nakamura-Harikrishna, 2005, there followed: 2...♞e7 3.♙c4 d6 4.d3 ♙e6 5.♙g5 ♘f6 6.♞h4 ♘bd7 7.♘c3 c6 8.♘ge2 h6 9.♙xf6 ♞xf6 10.♞xf6 ♘xf6 11.♙xe6 fxe6 12.f4 exf4 13.♘xf4 e5 14.♘g6 ♞g8 15.0-0 ♘f7 16.♘h4 with approximately equal chances.



The best move for a player with aggressive intentions is 2...♘f6. At the same time, it seems quite logical, as it helps Black to develop very quickly, while White has to waste several tempi with his queen before completing development. After 3.♞xe5+ ♙e7 we reach the diagrammed position:



Now blocking the e-file with 4.♙e2? is not the best option. I analyse: 4...♘c6 5.♞f4 d5 (alternatives are 5...0-0 and 5...♘d4 6.♙d1 ♘e6) 6.exd5 (after 6.e5 ♘e4 Black has a substantial advantage due to the multiple threats on the white monarch in the next couple of moves; after 6.♘c3 ♘d4 7.♙d1 ♘e6 Black has the upper hand) 6...♘xd5 7.♞g3 ♘d4 and Black is better.

Therefore White should play the prophylactic 4.♞f4 and now play may continue 4...0-0 (or 4...♘c6 5.e5 ♘d5 6.♞e4 ♘b6 7.♘f3 0-0 8.♙d3 g6 9.0-0±) 5.e5 ♞e8



Now of course 6.exf6? is met by 6...♗d6+, but White has two good alternatives:

– 6.♗e2 ♖d5 7.♗e4 ♖b4 8.♖a3 d5 9.♗f4 d4 (9...♗c6 10.d4) 10.♖f3 d3 11.cxd3 ♖xd3+ 12.♗xd3 ♗xd3 13.♗c4 ♗g6 14.0-0 Black has some compensation here, but I feel as though White is fine.

– 6.♖c3 ♗d6 7.d4 c5 8.♗e3 cxd4 9.♗xd4 ♖c6 10.♖f3 ♖xd4 11.♗xd4 ♗xe5 12.♖xe5 ♗e7 13.0-0 ♗xe5 14.♗xe5 ♗xe5 15.♗c4 White has a small advantage due to the backward pawn on d7 as well as the potential problems for Black's development.

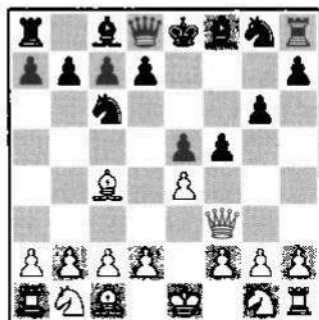
3.♗c4 g6

He spotted the mate! Or 3...♗e7 4.♗e2 ♖f6 5.♗f3 with similar play as in the game.

4.♗f3 ♖f6

Instead 4...♗f6 5.c3 ♗xf3 6.♖xf3 ♗g7 7.d3 leads to an equal position with play for both sides.

Many people are wondering whether 4...f5!? is the move which completely neutralizes the whole ♗h5 idea.



After our game in Denmark, GM Sasikiran gave some analysis of this variation. However, even in his analysis Black was not better.

This move probably is good enough for equality, but I don't think that Black has any advantage. Let's continue 5.♗e2 (not 5.exf5? ♖d4 6.♗g3 ♗f6 7.♗b3 ♖e7)

5...♖f6 6.d3 d6 7.♗g5 ♗g7 8.♖bc3 and White is perfectly fine in this position.

5.♗e2



Editorial note: Protecting his queen against a future ...♖d4 and developing a minor piece! If we put aside our prejudices for the moment, and look 'objectively' at the position, then we may conclude that White may not have an edge, but he is certainly not worse either.

Interestingly, this is a conclusion that none other than Vladimir Kramnik had also arrived at years and years ago. Kramnik had the very concrete idea of trying 2.♗h5 in some sort of decisive blitz game against Kasparov. Given the right moment the advantages are clear: no Kasparov home analysis to be worried about, and imagine the psychological advantage of such an 'insult'. (Kramnik told this to Short, and the latter revealed it to a wider audience in a Sunday Telegraph column).

5...♗g7

A later game Nakamura-Mitkov, Minneapolis 2005, saw: 5...d6 6.h3 ♗g7 7.d3 ♗e6 8.♗b3 h6 (or 8...0-0 9.0-0 with another normal position) 9.♗e3 ♗xb3 10.axb3 d5 11.0-0 0-0 12.♖a3 ♗h7 13.b4 a6 14.c3 with equal chances.

6.♖bc3?!

Although playable there is another move or-

der which is slightly preferable as it allows White to play h3 preventing ...g4: 6.d3 d6 7.h3 e6 8.b3 b4 9.a3. Compare this to the next comment. Here White can keep the pawn structure intact, while preventing ...g4 at the same time.

Editorial note: On the Playchess.com server an internet blitz event was held on 30 April 2005. Winner of the 'Champion's Challenge' was Anton Filippov who overcame Nakamura in the final. As you may have guessed Nakamura started all his blitz games in the final with 2...h5. They always reached the position after 6.d3 when in chronological order the games went:



– 6...d6 7.h3 a6 8.b3 c5 9.g5 h6 10.e3 dxc4 11.dxc4 e6 12.b3 0-0, Game 1.

– 6...d5 7.exd5 b4 8.b3 bxd5 9.h3 0-0 10.g5 c6 11.b3 h6 12.dxd5 hxg5 13.dxc3, Game 3.

– 6...0-0 7.h3 d5 8.exd5 b4 9.b3 bxd5 10.b3 c6 11.g5 a5 12.d2 b6 13.g4, Game 5.

6...d6 7.d3

Here 7.h3?! e6 (7...a5 8.d3 dxc4 9.dxc4 e6 10.b3 8.b3 axb3 9.cxb3 (after 9.axb3 b4 Black is better) and although White appears to be OK here, I dislike this position due to the pawn structure weaknesses.



7...g4

Other possibilities include:

- 7...a5 8.g5 (or 8.h3 dxc4 9.dxc4 e6 10.b3 c6 11.b2 0-0 12.0-0 with equality) 8...h6 (8...dxc4? 9.d5! – this little tactic leads to a completely winning position for White) 9.xxf6 xf6 (9...xf6 10.b5 e7 11.dxc3) 10.b5 e7 11.dxc3 e6 12.xe6 fxe6 13.g4 f7 14.0-0 White stands slightly better here due to the idea of f4 as well as having a better pawn structure.
- 7...h6 8.h3 a5 9.e3 dxc4 10.dxc4 e6 11.b3 0-0 12.0-0 with equal play in Smallville-NECF, ICC Blitz 2006.
- 7...e6 8.g5 h6 9.e3 dxc4 10.dxc4 0-0 11.0-0 d7 12.h3 a6 13.b1 White's chances are slightly preferable.

8...g3 d7 9.f3

This is better than it may look at first sight. With pawn e4 well-defended White is later on able to start pushing d3-d4.

9...e6 10.g5 d5

For 10...dxc4 11.dxc4 is slightly better for White.

11...h4 h6 12.e3 a5 13.b3 dxb3 14.axb3 a6

To be able to castle queenside in the future. Sasikiran does not want to castle kingside of course, as White is ready for an attack with g2-g4.

15.d4 e7 16.f2 exd4

Editorial note: Releasing the tension is more

or less forced. White is better after:

- 16...0-0? 17.dxe5, and
- 16...f5?! 17.exf5 gxf5 18.dxe5 dxe5 19.0-0-0, and
- 16...0-0-0 17.d5 d7 18.g4 f6 19.d2 b8 20.b4.

17.dxd4 f6 18.0-0-0

After the opening battle, White stands clearly better. Despite the fact that I proceeded to play too aggressively, this does not take away from the fact that White came out of this opening with a clear advantage.



18...0-0-0 19.f4 h8

Protecting the bishop, as 19...h8?! 20.f5 d5 21.dxd5 dxd5 22.xg7 is good for White.

20.h1 b8 21.b1 g5 22.fe2 e8



23.g4?

Much better was 23.e5! dxe5 (23...h5 24.g4 dxe5 25.a7+ a8 26.c5 f6 27.gxh5±) 24.a7+ a8 25.c5 d6 26.g3! eed8 27.xd6 cxd6 28.b6±.

23...f8 24.g3 d7 25.e3 h8 26.ge2 e5 27.h4 g7 28.h1 f6 29.d4 d7 30.e3 f6 31.hxg5 hxg5 32.e5 xe5 33.h5 g8 34.d5 de8 35.c1 g7 36.e3 f6 37.h2 h8 38.g2

Or 38.dh1 hx2 39.xh2 h8 40.wh1 hx2 41.xh2 wh7. Yet again, the position remains balanced. The remainder is less interesting for our purposes.

38...d7 39.d4 h3 40.c4 wf6 41.f2 eh8 42.b4 we5 43.c5 dxc5 44.bxc5 xc5 45.c3 f6

Black has a winning position.

46.c2 a4 47.b4 d7 48.b3 h1 49.xh1 hxh1+ 50.a2 b6 51.wf8+ we8 52.wxe8+

52.wxf6 loses to 52...e6!.

52...xe8 53.c5 d7 54.xd7+

Or 54.d5 dxc5 55.xc5 f7.

54...xd7 55.b3 e1 56.c3 e6+ 57.c2 e2+ 58.c1 a5 59.c2 f2 60.d4 d7 61.c5 b6 62.d5 c8 63.e5 fxe5 64.xe5 c5 65.b3 f1+ 66.d2 a4 67.xc5

Losing, but 67.d1 xf3 68.xg5 f2+ 69.c3 g2 would not really prolong the fight as 70.g8+ c7 71.g5 loses the knight after 71...f5.

67...bxc5 68.xc5+ b7 69.xg5 xf3 70.d5 e6 71.d3 f1 72.g3 f2+ 73.c3 b6 74.b4 f4+ 75.a3 b5 76.e3 d5 77.d3 c4 78.e3 d4 79.g5 d1 80.b3 axb3 81.e8 a1+ 82.b2 a2+ 83.c3 c2+ 84.d4 b2 85.b8+ a4 86.g6 b5 87.g7 b1 0-1

CHAPTER 18

Who is Who

How modest can you be? **John van der Wiel** prefers to harmlessly develop his bishop to e2 in the Four Knights. A typical waiting move that vaguely resembles 4.a3 – the Gunsberg Variation – subject of the very first volume in the SOS series. There is no need for false modesty though, when we see the Dutch grandmaster reveal his drawing percentage and his games.

Early rook pawn moves are always welcomed by SOS scribes. This time it is **Glenn Flear** who advocates 6.a3 versus the Semi-Slav. It has some bite too as Flear's own perfect score might indicate.

Let's accept the Queen's Gambit and by all means hang on to the pawn with 3...♙e6 too. At least this is what the Englishman preaches in his other contribution.

Friso Nijboer is known for his attacking skills. It should surprise no one that he counters Philidor's Defence with the Shirov Gambit.

The Rubinstein Variation of the Nimzo Indian stands for theory – vast amounts of it. Now there is a way to get round all this as **Dorian Rogozenko** explains with his customary objectivity.

SOS-6 featured a treatise on 3...a6 in the Caro-Kann by John van der Wiel. This time **Adrian Mikhalchishin** goes one step beyond with the immediate 3...b5 – the old Guregenidze Variation.

The Slovenian grandmaster is out to make life difficult for all those Grünfeld and Benoni players too. Surprise your opponent with 3.d5!

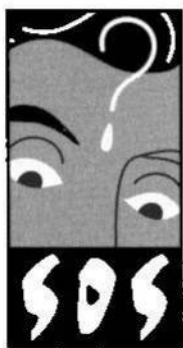
Taking Mikhail Tal as his source of inspiration, **Arthur Kogan** presents a typical SOS weapon versus the (Accelerated) Dragon. Important news for all insomniacs out there.

A Bird man himself, **Dimitri Reinderman** knows the perfect antidote (on move 1!). Find out why a knight on h6 is never dim after 1.f4.

Lasker taught us to develop knights before bishops. **Alexander Finkel** demonstrates that in the Modern you can put pressure on White's centre by moving your bishops first. Flexibility rules as the knights will eventually home in on the central squares.

We gladly welcome a joint effort by **Jean-Olivier Leconte** and **Igor Glek** to revitalize the obsolete Gledhill Attack versus the French. Some primitive tactics and a novelty on move 6 are involved to bring 5.♜g4 back into the limelight.

Did someone just mention the word primitive? Of course we could not resist when **Hikaru Nakamura** was prepared to speak his mind on 2.♜h5. Never did he intend to go for Scholar's Mate, nor did he just want to shock his opponent. Logical and harmonious are the keywords in his introduction.



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